

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 10, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on May 10, 2022.

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jonathan LeBlanc

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent (arrived at 7:37 PM) & Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent

Madam Chair stated that Mr. LeBlanc will arrive later. He is currently at a Baseball game coaching.

Madam Chair stated we will do things a little differently tonight regarding audience participation. The sign-up sheet will go out now. You can only sign yourself up to speak and you cannot sign up other speakers. If you would like to speak, you must get here in time to sign up. When your allotted time is up and if you continue to speak, I will call for a recess and public comment will end. At our last meeting, I needed to stop audience participation 6 times due to the audience calling out and being disruptive. This will not happen again. I will call for a recess. She reminded Board members, we cannot engage in a conversation with audience members. You can respond to audience members during your comments.

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**
7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**
 - a. **Early Release Day** - as presented
 - b. **EPS Update**

Mr. Longey stated Mr. Drezek is at the Bushnell for the Teacher of the Year Awards Presentations at the Bushnell. They are celebrating our Enfield TOY for past two years that were not recognized due to Covid. He will be here soon.

Mr. Longey gave the Board an update on the Alliance District status. As of this time, we have not heard anything from the State and have not received an official notification that Enfield has been accepted as an Alliance District. Mr. Drezek will attend a formal meeting on Monday where he will find out more information about this. He will update the Board with any additional information he receives.

Mr. Longey stated due to staffing issues from Covid, we needed to close Henry Barnard. Barnard is a unique building due to the number of special programs we offer there. We are

currently watching several schools due to increasing Covid numbers. We are doing everything we can to keep our buildings open and are using college students when we can. We have moved several staff members around to assist with shortages.

Mr. Longey stated when someone tests positive, they must be out for at least 5 days. We still need to follow CDC guidelines. Even if you don't have symptoms and were exposed and test positive, you must stay out at least 5 days. This is the issue we are running into.

Mr. Longey stated that Mr. Drezek instituted mask wearing for all staff and not students. This was done to preserve and protect our staff. It is really a survival thing now. Staff that wear masks and were exposed and test negative can continue to work. This has been saving us and allowing us to keep our schools open. Once this waiver passes, we will change mask wearing for staff.

Mr. Longey addressed the last day of school. The Board already waived the 181st day of school for JFK. We will be asking the Board to waive the 181st day for Henry Barnard school. Barnard's 180th day will be June 24th. If this does not happen, Barnard's last day would be on June 27th. The state requires that all students must attend 180 in-person days of school, and this must conclude on June 30th. No exceptions will be allowed. This will only allow us 5 days if we need to cancel school except for Henry Barnard (4 days for Barnard). If we are forced to close for any reason, we would be forced to consider holding classes on weekends in order to meet our educational statutory requirements. This would be the worst case scenario. Mr. Drezek will be here later to address any Board member questions regarding the 180 days.

8. AUDIENCES

Madam Chair read a prepared statement about expectations for audience participation. We will continue to utilize a 4-minute time limit for audience participation tonight. She added that you will need to sign up to talk and she will not call up anyone from the audience to speak. Thank you.

Peter Jonaitis, Farmstead Lane – Mr. Jonaitis stated he was a teacher for 38 years in Enfield. He loved teaching. He was a Board member for 6 years and wanted to make a change. He would like the Board to look into modified classes again. He loved teaching these kinds of classes and knew how to reach the students. He would love to see these classes be brought back again. Students are now all in regular classrooms. He feels our average students are missing out the most. He would cross teach the materials to his students. He would like the Curriculum committee to look at the textbooks so no more mistakes are made. He also urged the Chair to look into Robert's rules regarding taking a recess.

Ray Peabody, Washington Road – Mr. Peabody stated when he was on the Board, he met a lot of our teachers. They are really dedicated individuals that teach our kids. They are preparing them for vocations, careers or college or wherever life takes them. Like Firefighters, Paramedics, Policemen and others, they are not in it for the money. He has seen a lot of the Board meetings on TV, and audience members start off by saying "We the people." He read from the Constitution. "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves, our prosperity to ordain, establish this constitution for the United States of America." He has learned that liberty is the guardrail of freedom. We are free to carry arms, but we are not at liberty to go and shoot someone. We have freedom of speech but are not free to call anyone a pedophile and slander them. We have the freedom to drive a car, but you are not allowed to break the laws while driving. He researched Critical Race Theory. This is just one way to study racial bias laws. He encourages people to research this. He thanked each Board member for volunteering to do this work. He thanked the Administration for the outstanding leadership they have shown during the unprecedented Covid crises. He read the preamble of the Constitution because the needs of the group outweigh the individuals in some instances. He appreciates you keeping

the safety of our kids and teachers in the forefront. Thank you.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Acree apologized for not being there in person. She is feeling a bit under the weather. She congratulated all the teachers that are being recognized for being nominated as Teacher of the Year. Teaching is a very noble profession. She appreciates your hard work and dedication. Thank you.

Dr. Calnen stated Stowe Early Learning Center had a presentation about tracking student's progress. The Policy Committee approved purchasing Child Plus software that will save us money and time in the long run. SNAP recipients will now receive a higher point rating to enroll at Head Start. The enrollment and attendance at Head Start is at 82%. Enrollment over the past 9 months has not dipped below 80% which is amazing with the rise of Covid cases and a testament about our Head Start program. We also approved a 2.28% COLA to support staff salaries, benefits the BOE will need to provide increase in non-Federal contributions. Funding for quality improvements for staff training, mental health management, the promotion of language skills and literacy has also been allocated. They will hold a summer program of 3 classes that will be held in July. This week they will hold a routine Federal program review of the Enfield Head Start to monitor program status. Head Start will hold their annual self-assessment on June 3rd that will involve staff, families and community partners and other stake holders.

Dr. Calnen stated Kite accepted the School Readiness Council recommendations for professional development and coaching for ECDC and to fund the 28 slots. A Kite Equity Committee has been created to plan for an equity related event. The Board of Education is well represented on this committee. We discussed the self-assessment results that were overall very positive. There were some areas where improvements might be made. This included inclusiveness of collaboration and development of future leadership and committee responsibilities. Strategic use of data is another area that requires attention.

Mrs. Cushman stated this is the time of year for programs where we can appreciate the fruits of the school year and the diligent work of our children and teachers. Edgar H. Parkman will hold their spring concert on June 8th at 6:00 PM at Enfield High School.

Mrs. Cushman stated Enfield Adult Education will hold their graduation ceremony on June 9th at 6:00 PM in the Annex Library.

Mrs. Cushman stated she had the opportunity to stop by the Pearl Street Library to see Enfield High School student Sam Barry's artwork display. She is such a talented artist. This is another testimony of the strength of our arts program. She really liked the picture titled "Memory" and wondered what the story was that went along with this piece of art. It was a delightful display. She is very appreciative that the Enfield Pearl Street Library can display our students artwork so proudly.

Mr. Hamre stated the program at the Pearl Street Library is part of the Enfield Cultural Arts Commission and collaboration with the Enfield Public Schools. He was glad to hear the positive feedback about Ms. Barry's artwork. She is an amazing artist and is extremely talented. She comes from an extremely talented family.

Mr. Hamre stated the JFK production of Moana Jr. was outstanding. It was so inclusive. This was only what he saw on stage. He couldn't see those that were behind the scenes working. He congratulated everyone involved in this wonderful production. Our staff goes above and beyond when it comes to working with our students to put on these masterful productions. Kudos to them all.

Mr. Hamre stated JFK has a wish list of items on Amazon and it can also be found on their

PTO page at enfieldpto.com website. If you have any questions, please contact him by e-mail.

Mr. Hamre thanked our two audience members for speaking and for the opportunity to hear from former Board members. This was great to hear from our former Board members.

Mrs. Pickett agreed with Mr. Hamre regarding JFK's production of Moana Jr. It was great and she brought her daughter to see the play. Everyone was part of this play, and it was very inclusive. We have some very amazing students and staff. Thank you to everyone involved in putting on this outstanding production. It really takes a lot of adults to put this together. Thank you.

Mrs. Pickett stated last week we recognized our teachers and staff. At Enfield Street, we participated in the Fun Run. She thanked the members of the PTO for everything they did and the area businesses that participated by donating raffle prizes. She thanked the staff that were involved in this great event. It was a lot of fun and she truly enjoyed seeing children playing again.

Mrs. Pickett stated Parkman will have a Spring Fling Dance and students can also attend a Yard Goat game on June 17th.

Mrs. Pickett stated PK-5 students can participate in a Spitfire track and field day meet on June 1st at Enfield High School from 4-5 PM. This event is free. They are asking you to bring non-perishable can goods that will be donated to the Enfield Food Shelf. Please come out and have some fun with our track students and staff.

Mrs. Pickett stated Enfield Unplugged has events for families to participate in and unplug from your electronic devices. This is something her family needs to do more of.

Mrs. Pickett stated ERfC will hold a 7 week summer camp for students in grades K-8 starting on June 27th and ending on August 12th. This will be held at Prudence Crandall Elementary School. For more information, please go to their website at erfcinc.org.

Mrs. Pickett stated there is also a student volunteer counseling program ERfC will hold during the summer for interested students in grades 9-12. Students can develop leadership skills and become impactful counselors and role models. They also have before school and after school programming for children.

Mrs. Pickett asked about Covid staffing and how can we help. Mr. Longey stated if you know of any college students that are looking for jobs, please refer them to us. They will need to be fingerprinted. We have a real need for additional supervision. They will be hired as a paraprofessional. Please direct them to us and we will answer any questions they might have.

Mrs. Pickett will help to spread the word in our community. Staffing is necessary to make it through to the end of the school year.

Mrs. Pickett thanked our audience speakers for speaking tonight. She agrees with Mr. Hamre. She also added when audience members share your experiences with them it helps us to find solutions.

Mr. Unghire also thanked our speakers tonight. We also have a third former Board member in the audience tonight. He thanked them for supporting us.

Mr. Unghire stated the Memorial PTO welcomed the staff last week and held a different event each day recognizing them for everything they do for our students.

Mr. Unghire stated on May 11th Memorial will hold a Blanket Bingo from 6-7 PM. He encourages families to attend this great event. They held their book week on May 2nd – 8th.

They will hold the book fair on May 24th-26th. They will hold a PTO picnic from 5-7 PM on May 24th.

Mr. Ryder apologized for not being there tonight. He is also a bit under the weather.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney also held their book fair last week. They held a picnic and children were able to play on the playground. This morning all grade 5 students went to JFK to see the Moana Jr. performance. He was unable to attend this performance but heard it was amazing. He is glad our grade 5 students were able to see the play today.

Mr. Ryder stated tickets are on sale for the Whitney Wolves Yard Goat day. The game will be held on Sunday, June 5th and tickets are \$12 each. You can purchase them on enfieldpto.com. The last Eli Whitney PTO meeting will be held on May 16th.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney students recently wrote persuasive essays about what they would do if they were principal for a day. The deadline was last Friday. The essays are being reviewed and the student with the winning essay will be a principal for a day on May 23rd.

Mr. Ryder stated he has posted a lot of dates and events on the EnfieldPTO.com website for upcoming school events like field day, end of the year events and activities. So please check out your schools upcoming events.

Madam Chair stated last week was Teacher Appreciation week. A lot of our schools recognized our amazing teachers. It was a tough week with all the Covid outbreaks. We truly appreciate everything you are doing for our students in our district. Thank you.

Madam Chair added this week it is Nurse Appreciation week. We also have some amazing nurses. You were amazing during the Covid pandemic and continue to be amazing. We know how much you have given and have gone above and beyond. Thank you. She also thanked her daughter who is a nurse for what she is doing.

Madam Chair had the honor to grow up in Enfield and attend Enrico Fermi. She attended a recognition dinner for Coach Ben Alex. He was added to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. He was a Fermi coach that impacted a lot of lives. This was a great event to attend. A lot of his former wrestlers attended this event. It was very heartfelt. Congratulations Ben Alex. His wife was a teacher and guidance counselor in Enfield.

Madam Chair stated the EHS Baseball team held their senior night at Dunkin Donuts Park. They played against Suffield and won. It was a great game.

Madam Chair stated students have received their Safe Grad packets. We are up to 55 seniors that will attend the Safe Grad event at Sonny's Place. These can be turned into Mrs. Nelson's office.

Madam Chair stated the senior prom will be held on May 20th. The seniors have a lot of events that will be coming up like the class picnic and class night. These end of year events are all sneaking up on us and our calendars are getting full.

Madam Chair stated she served with all 3 of the Board members in the audience. We actually have 4 former Board members in the audience. Mr. Tkacz also was a Board member, but she did not serve with him. Once a Board member, you are always a Board member. Mr. Jonaitis always spoke passionately about modified classes. She added that our Terra Nova program was great, and Mr. Jonaitis did not want this program to end. She thanked Mr. Peabody for the research he did on CRT.

Madam Chair stated ERfC will hold a Toast of the Town on June 3rd at the Twin Hill Country Club. All proceeds raised will go towards helping students attend the summer escape camp

program.

Mr. Longey added they will have a great speaker again this year - it is Madam Chair. Madam Chair added they will have live entertainment and she couldn't say no to Connie Provencher.

Mr. Drezek arrived at 7:37 PM

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. BOE Policy Adoptions & Policy Revisions – Second Reading

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Enfield Board of Education approves the proposed new policies and policy revisions as presented for a second reading.

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

b. Discussion and Action if any Regarding the Formation of the Pizza Consent Assignment Task Force (Tabled 04-26-22)

Mr. Unghire spoke with Mrs. Pickett about the formation of a committee. We collaborated and discussed what will best serve our community. We spoke about the frameworks that could include family members, parents, staff and possibly community partners and students if appropriate. This committee will enhance family partnerships, engagement with our school system and our administration. We can discuss policies and review exiting policies or new policies and how they are implemented in our school system. We will find ways to share and review the curriculum units and lessons including sex and health education so families are aware. We will continue to work together with leadership and determine membership and define the committees purpose.

Mrs. Pickett stated Mr. Unghire captured what we discussed appropriately. She reached out to Mr. Unghire, and this is a joint effort. We are all up here for a common purpose of supporting Enfield Public Schools. We can do our best work when we all work together. There is common ground around family engagement including family voices and the work we do. We are starting from a place of common ground and how can we shape this to be an inclusive positively shaped stakeholder advisory committee. There needs to be additional support from the administration with input from staff and families looking at our existing structures that are already in place. We are on the right path and that is her hope.

Madam Chair stated the core of what you are saying is it is really about the curriculum. Looking at the curriculum and making the parents feel that they are a valued stakeholder. There are questions about State standards and things like that and why we are teaching things like this in our district. She appreciates your collaboration. You seem to be doing things very productively. She is happy that you are working on this together collaboratively.

Madam Chair added we also discussed keeping this language on the agenda.

Mr. Unghire would like to modify that to include the collaboration effort between Mrs. Pickett and myself and putting together an advisory committee.

Mrs. Zalucki explained that first a motion is needed to place this item back on the table to continue your discussion.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Enfield Board of Education approves bringing this item back on the table to discuss the Formation of the Pizza Consent Assignment Task Force.

A vote by **roll call – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Discussion:

Mr. Unghire would like to modify the motion that is currently on the table.

Mr. Hamre stated we need to address the current motion first.

Mrs. Zalucki explained the Board will need to either accept the motion as presented or vote it down. If this motion fails, it would be off the table. The Board could then make a new motion.

Madam Chair added we would need a 2/3 vote to make a motion.

Mr. Unghire asked if there are any alternatives or amend this motion. Mrs. Zalucki explained you cannot amend this motion. You need to vote either yes or no. If this motion fails, you can make a new motion.

Mr. Unghire asked if he could withdraw the motion? Mrs. Zalucki explained that since we tabled this item from the last meeting, the answer is no. You could have done that at the last meeting. Mr. Unghire stated the motion cannot be withdrawn at this time.

Mr. Hamre called for the vote, seconded by Mrs. Pickett.

Madam Chair stated we will vote on this and then we can make another motion to add an item to the agenda for tonight about our new committee we will form. Then this item will be on the agenda, and we will not need to wait until our next meeting, and we can continue to work on this.

Mrs. Pickett added we can have a preliminary discussion about this tonight and this discussion will continue.

Madam Chair stated this way the work will continue. Mr. Unghire agreed with Madam Chair.

Mrs. Cushman stated this will keep us accountable to keep working on this item.

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

Suspend the Rules to add an item to the Agenda:

Madam Chair would like to add an item to the agenda for discussion and action if any regarding the formation of an advisory committee.

Mr. Unghire added we can work with Board leadership and define some of the gaps within the framework.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Enfield Board of Education establishes the formation of an Advisory Committee.

Discussion:

Mr. Unghire stated our next steps would be for us to formalize our framework. Mrs. Pickett and I will work on the framework, and we will present this to Board leadership. Then we can begin to come up with a name for the committee, membership and who would like to be on this committee and then go from there.

Madam Chair stated we will not be taking any action on this tonight.

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett to suspend the rules and add an item to the

agenda.

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

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Enfield Board of Education establishes the formation of an Advisory Committee.

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

Madam Chair thanked Mr. Unghire and Mrs. Pickett for their collaboration. She is excited to see what you both come up with so everyone can feel like they added value to this

11. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Appointment of Enfield Cultural Arts Commission BOE Liaison

Madam Chair stated that Mr. Hamre was previously on this committee, and he would like to continue as the Board liaison to the Enfield Cultural Arts Committee. He will work alongside of Councilman Santanella.

Madam Chair added this appointment does not need to be approved by the Board. I will appoint Mr. Hamre to this commission.

Mr. Hamre thanked Madam Chair. This commission is a collaboration effort with Councilman Santanella. We have a vibrant and active art appreciative community. We have incredible talent in our town that. We have the Opera House Players, and we have outrageously gifted students at John F. Kennedy and Enfield High. Hopefully, they will be able to pursue their art and passion beyond their school years. He is happy to be in this position to speak for all the school art programs as well as the Enfield Cultural Arts Commission to promote what they have been working on. Thank you.

Madam Chair asked if any Board member would like to be an alternate to this committee, to let her know.

b. Discussion and Action if any regarding the May 24, 2022 BOE Meeting

Mr. Unghire moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Enfield Board of Education cancels the May 24, 2022 BOE meeting and will hold a special meeting on May 31, 2022.

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

c. Action if any, Waiving the 181st School Day for Henry Barnard School

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education waives the 181st School Day for Henry Barnard School.

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

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum – Mrs. Pickett reported she will confirm with Ms. Middleton about the next Curriculum meeting since it is on the same night as JFK's award night. She will get back to you on this meeting. We have been discussing TAG.

Finance – Dr. Calnen reported the Finance Committee we met on May 9th and will have items for Board approval. We reviewed TAG portfolio investments and met with Wolf Financial representatives. We will stay the course with our investments. We also reviewed nutrition

financial reports.

Policy – Mr. Ryder reported the Policy Committee met on April 19th. We will meet next on May 17th at 5:30 PM.

Leadership – Madam Chair reported she would like Board Leadership to meet and discuss our new committee. She will see which date will work best for Board Leadership members and will set a date for a meeting.

Joint Facility – Madam Chair reported the Joint Facility Committee will meet next on May 12th.

JFK Building – Mr. Ryder reported that he was unable to attend the last meeting. Madam Chair added that Mr. LeBlanc has not arrived yet. Mr. Ryder will get an update and will give a report it at our next meeting

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

Joint Insurance – Madam Chair reported they will meet on May 12th. They might be rescheduling this meeting.

Enfield Mental Health Wellness Workgroup – Dr. Calnen reported the workgroup met on May 3rd. We discussed anxiety, depression and substance abuse disorders. We will be working in groups, and we will also discuss infant and early child mental health issues.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 26, 2022, be approved. Mr. Ryder asked for 2 corrections to be made (page 12 & 21). Both Mr. Hamre and Mrs. Pickett moved, that the amended April 26, 2022 minutes be approved as indicated. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously with the proposed amendments.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of April 2022 the total expenditures amount to \$6,493,626.15, broken down between payroll totaling \$4,468,869.18 and other accounts totaling \$1,024,756.97 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of April 2022 total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$562,701.72 broken down between payroll totaling \$447,129.61 and other accounts totaling \$115,572.11; 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Line Item Transfers, if any - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Madam Chair stated each Board member received an invitation to attend the Enfield Adult Education Graduation Ceremony being held on June 9, 2022 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM as mentioned earlier by Mrs. Cushman at the Enfield Annex.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Enfield Board of Education enter into Executive Session – Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged Communication Regarding Response to FOI Requests.

A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Both Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey joined the Board in Executive Session at 8:10 PM.

No Board action occurred while in Executive Session.

Open Session:

The Board returned to open session at 9:14 PM.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett to adjourn the Regular Meeting of May 10, 2022.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Jonathan LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary