

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 12, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on December 12, 2017.

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ashley Depeau, Rich Regnier, Chris Rutledge, Charlotte Riley, Sarah Hernandez, Tina LeBlanc, Tim Neville, Scott Ryder and Walter

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent; Mr. Andrew P. Longey, Deputy Superintendent; Student Representatives Meghan Connery and Matt Campo

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. **Fall 2017 Athletic sports Recognition**

Mr. Drezek introduced our Athletic Director Cory O'Connell to the Board. Mr. O'Connell will recognize our Enfield High Fall 2017 students and teams for their athletic achievements.

Mr. O'Connell thanked Mr. Drezek and the Board for the opportunity to acknowledge the Enfield High student-athletes and teams that had outstanding achievements throughout the Fall 2017 season.

Mr. O'Connell had the coaches present the awards to each student.

Rob Barnes – Cross Country:

Sydney Nash – All Conference, Qualified for State Open

Ethan O'Farrell – All Conference

Daniel White – All Conference

Coach Cookie Bromage & Amy Bartholomew – Field Hockey:

2017 CCC East Champions and Class L State Semi Finalist

Kaitlyn Bourque – All Conference

Taylor Geaglone – All Conference and All State

Tori Geaglone – All Conference and All State

Mikayla March – All Conference and All State

Kelly Mazza – All Conference

Laurissa Montigny – All Conference

Taylor Geaglone – Hartford Courant Player of the Year and Connecticut High School Coaches Association Field Hockey Player of the Year

Coach James Lyver – Football:

Nick Beila – All Conference

Xavier Copenig – All Conference

Mason Dumas – All Conference

Coach Anthony Allegro – Boys Soccer:

Keegan Reim – All Conference

Coach Katie Battista – Girls Soccer:

Caterina Fonseca – All State and All Conference

Delaney Lawler – All State and All Conference

Bella Laramée – All Conference

Sarah Marino – All Conference

Maggie Mercik – All Conference

Coach Debbie Goodman – Girls Swimming:

Grace Farris – All Conference

Coach Albina Belisle – Girls Volleyball:

Alexa Liucci – All Conference

Mr. O'Connell congratulated the student athletes for their outstanding accomplishments.

Chairman Kruzel also congratulated the students for a great job. You have put Enfield on the map. It is great to see all of you. Thank you.

The Enfield High Field Hockey Team and the student athletes proudly displayed the 2017 CCC Champion Banner for a group photo.

**b. Joint Facilities Committee**

Chairman Kruzel introduced the Joint Facilities Committee members – Board Member Tim Neville, Board Chairman Walter Kruzel, Deputy Mayor Donna Szewczak and Council member Liz Davis.

Joint Facility Committee members gave the Board an in-depth presentation regarding the 33 Town and Board facilities. They reviewed the task of the committee, update of the work done to date, analysis approach, summary data spreadsheet, committee member concerns, questions and current thinking regarding the process, recommendations and next steps needed.

Mr. Neville asked if Board members have any questions.

Mrs. LeBlanc is happy to hear that some facets of the Security Committee have been moved to the Joint Facilities Committee. When you are looking at renovating the buildings, you should also be looking at safety.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about Hazardville Memorial not qualifying for some of the upgrades because of the age of the building. Mrs. Szewczak stated both referendums failed, the \$41 million for facilities and \$11 million for performance contract. We had a choice of 3 different performance contract schemes. The one for natural gas and windows at Memorial had a payback period of over 16 years. We felt this payback period was too long and choose

something with a quicker payback.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we are looking at the facilities. There was a time when the state would offer paybacks for roofs. This is where a Facilities Director would come in. In the past, the state would buy the windows and we would install them. We can get state grants for things like this to improve our schools and town facilities. The only way to keep the money for what we want to do is through a referendum. It is nice if you have a fund where you can put money aside each year. Doing this can look like a big pot of money that will help to keep the mill rate down when you are looking at projects. A referendum for facilities is critical. This is how we were able to repair the roads in five-year increments.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated you discussed increasing the size of the charge for the Joint Facilities Committee. Mrs. Szewczak stated that both she and Mr. Neville have gone through most of the drawings for the buildings. The Town Library has 3 different schemes for roofing. The verifications for when the roof was done in 2005 were not there. These are the kind of things that make us uncomfortable. Someone needs to be responsible for this. Part of the referendum could fund an employee like a Facilities Director. They would apply for grants like what the Board of Education does with some of their employees.

Mrs. LeBlanc agrees with this person applying for grants.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked if JFK would be included in this. Mr. Neville stated we will discuss this on January 4, 2018 with the State to see what our options are. This is the logical place for JFK to be included.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about this back in the beginning when we were discussing the PCB's at JFK. The Joint Facilities Committee is the best place to get the information from for Board, Town Council members and the community.

Mr. Neville added this needs to be one stop shopping for our facilities. It just makes sense to have a Joint Facilities Committee address this. We are starting a process and hope to have some closure within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Rutledge thanked the committee for the work you have put into this report and on this committee. Organizing and prioritizing is one of the hardest jobs being on a committee. You have done a great job. He likes what he is hearing and likes the next steps including JFK in this. He likes that you are discussing a long-term plan. Having a Facility Manager is a good idea. This person could keep the records in place while prioritizing and project manage our buildings.

Mr. Rutledge asked about a referendum being the best option and keeping the money for the project. Would creating a project lockbox so the money that has been budgeted is only used for those items be an option. This way the taxpayers will know exactly how the money will be used for. Mrs. Szewczak stated any leftover CIP funds after 3 years in a project, will be swept and it will go where it is needed. The play-scape at Eli Whitney came from a sweep. You will take money from completed projects and use it for other areas. We just bought a property on South River Street. That also came from leftover CIP funds.

Mrs. Szewczak added that when people come to Enfield to build new businesses, it is imperative that we look like we know what we are doing. This is how she wants people to look at Enfield. When we were looking at filling the Town Manager position, one of the candidates told us we need to improve on how we look. We have a lot of good things in Enfield, but we need to take care of some of the things that need to be addressed. Our buildings are well cared for on a day-to-day basis. This Joint Facilities Committee is looking at end of life issues.

Mr. Rutledge stated differentiating maintenance issues and end-of-life are very different. It is like repairing your vehicle. There are some things you will do to maintain it before it is time to replace it. It is not because of poor maintenance, it is because it has come to the end of its usefulness. Thank you.

Mr. Regnier asked how many of the 33 buildings are vacant. Mrs. Szewczak stated 4-5 of the buildings are vacant and some are being underutilized. As we are doing this, we are looking for where the transit center to go in. We are now taking over the Strand, 28 and 33 South River Street. We have more buildings that will be on-line. We are looking at acquiring the land across from the casket company (33 South River Street). We will bundle these for RFP's.

Mr. Neville stated we are looking at the buildings that are being underutilized or are just too old to renovate. We need to think creatively and repurpose when we can. He also agrees with referendums. The items that are under \$600K that need repairs could be done using town employees when there is downtime. There are a lot of small jobs that could be bundled. This is another job for a project manager.

Mr. Regnier asked about the \$101 million dollars needed for repairs, is any of the energy performance contract funding included in this? Mrs. Szewczak stated this is included in her spreadsheet. We need to look into the big-ticket items and organize.

Mr. Ryder asked if this document is public. Both Mrs. Szewczak and Mr. Neville stated it is a public document.

Mr. Ryder stated he is not from Enfield originally and asked about the addresses to these buildings. Both Mrs. Szewczak and Mr. Neville stated the addresses can be added to this document. Most of the committee members are from Enfield and know where these buildings are. This is an excellent point.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about the Control Module building. Someone needs to take care of this vacant building. Chairman Kruzel added that CREC leased it for the Public Safety Academy before their new building was ready. Mrs. Szewczak added they still need to maintain their building even if it is vacant.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Mrs. Szewczak and Mr. Neville for their hard work. We will discuss this with joint Leadership on December 20<sup>th</sup>.

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

- a. Student Representatives – as presented
- b. EHS NHS Induction Ceremony – as presented
- c. Wreaths Across America – as presented
- d. Board Workshop – as presented
- e. Christmas/New Year Break – as presented
- f. Grants Report – as presented
- g. December Events – as presented

Mr. Drezek gave the Board an update regarding PowerSchool at Enfield High, John F. Kennedy, the intermediate schools and the primary schools. The JFK student and parent portal will be open on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> with progress reports going home.

## **8. AUDIENCES**

Chairman Kruzel read the Board's new policy #9325.2 Order of Business and Meeting Conduct. He limited audience participation comments to 3 minutes.

Mr. Drezek read a prepared statement regarding a comment made at the last Board meeting regarding parent volunteers.

“The Board welcomes the participation of parent volunteers and assisting teachers, staff in classrooms, field trips and other settings being supervised by teachers. However, the Board’s policy on this issue requires that volunteers work under the direct supervision of school staff. The Board’s policy of allowing parent volunteers to work with students under the direct supervision of staff balances the Board places on the work of volunteers. The Board needs to protect itself from the impermissibly high-risk of liability that would result in with parents being permitted to work directly without staff supervision. We thank you all for your understanding.”

Judy Kilty, Abbe Road – Mrs. Kilty feels the Board’s policy change regarding audience participation is a big mistake. She has seen many changes in the schools and has concerns for the Boards roll and vision for the public schools. You need priorities and goals. She has many concerns that she hopes will be on your list of priorities like the failed JFK referendum. What are the next steps to address the PCB’s at JFK. The public needs to be updated on the progress for this. How will the Board address the growing population at JFK? You are charged with overseeing the education of our students. The facilities affect our students learning at JFK. It is a mistake to limit audience participation.

Lynn Kostek, Teach Street – Mrs. Kostek congratulated the Board on being appointed. The Board of Education has responsibilities. The Board needs to ensure that our children have an appropriate building to learn in. You are responsible for the education of our children. She would like the School facilities to return to the Board of Education. Chapter 170 of the CT State Statutes lists the Town Council should not maintain school facilities. The Board shall provide a proper learning environment for all students. The Town Council should not be making decisions for the maintenance of the school buildings. Education is a state issue and you are the agents of the charter. The Board is charged with this responsibility.

Marcy Taliceo, Coolidge Street – Mrs. Taliceo stated that the PCB’s found at JFK may be an issue with all of our schools. Indoor air quality testing should be done at all school buildings with young children in them. We need to know what action needs to be taken to protect our children and staff members. Section 10-231f requires the Board of Education to establish an indoor air quality committee. She would like the Board to explain what efforts have been taken regarding indoor air quality testing at the elementary schools. Student safety and security is another top concern for the Board to address. The security meetings have stopped. What is being done to continue hardening our schools. Section 10-222m requires the Board to establish a safety and security committee at each school. What has been done to develop a school security plan. The public needs to know if any progress has been made.

Karen Weseliza, Renee Lane – Mrs. Weseliza congratulated the Board on their appointments. Many parents have posted on social media about overcrowding at the K-2 schools. The average class size in the kindergarten classrooms is 20 or 21 students. It is a proven fact that smaller classes in the lower levels is a precursor to academic success. Enfield is compromising quality education for fiscal responsibility. Increased class sizes need to be addressed in the K-2 schools. What steps will the Board take to address the increased behavioral problems and students with special needs. We need to address the needs to promote success. Enfield has a great early education program. By addressing problems earlier, you will set yourselves up for fiscal savings as well as addressing the behavioral problems that are being seen at all levels. Thank you.

Gina Sullivan, Spier Avenue – Mrs. Sullivan congratulated all the Board members for their appointments. She stated the high school is a beautiful building. We need to service the needs

of all our children. What is being done for the middle of the road students. Why is there mediocracy. We should be pushing and encouraging our middle of the road students to go onto higher education, not to just go onto Asnuntuck. We should be pursuing programs like AVID (advancement via individual determination). We need to provide them with the proper tools, so they can succeed. Many of our students are not prepared when they get to the college level. Why are some of our students taking remedial classes in college during their first year. Some of them, are not returning after the first semester. Why is this okay. Our children deserve better.

Sue Braun, Light Street – Mrs. Braun stated that Enfield has a high dropout rate. She would like the Board to address this in their priorities. She would like the communication updated on the Board and school website. She would also like the website to be more user friendly. Communication with the community has been an issue. This needs to be a priority. There has been a theme tonight from audience participation – we need a plan. Many other towns have plans. A good plan provides a guideline. A plan will save us money. You must follow through with a list of priorities. The superintendent can help the Board develop a plan.

Liz Davis – North Maple Street – Mrs. Davis is here as a taxpayer, a resident and parent. She asked about the 6 behavioral specialists and what degree and experience do they have. A previous Board member posted unfavorable comments. She was told to let this go. No one should tell us not to speak if something is bothering them. Our country has been built on diversity. Our residents, taxpayers and parents have the right to have our voices heard at Board meetings. We all need to adhere to the same level of decorum. The new policy is to silence us. This is why she became involved in the town two years ago when we, the residents lost our voices. Never forget why you got involved. She wished them good luck this term.

## **9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Chairman Kruzel stated he will run Board member comments differently tonight. He will ask if any Board member would like to talk instead of going in roll call order.

Mrs. Hernandez thanked the audience members for their comments. Your voice is important and it is her job to listen to what you are saying and try to understand why. Our Board motto is we make a difference in Enfield – every child, every day. We need to hear from you even if we do not like what we are hearing. She knows that you want what is best for our children. She knows about the high school and homeschooling. There are things that are happening at our elementary schools that she relies on hearing from you about. She hopes that we get to a place where the residents feel they are important and they are being heard. Removing public comments may not have been done intentionally but it does send a message. She looks forward to discussing this with Board members at our upcoming workshop. It has been perceived that public comments are not important because some parents don't care. This is not true, and our parents do care. The evening is a difficult time for many of our parents and taxpayers with children. We need to have a space on our agenda for parents to speak.

Mr. Rutledge wished everyone a merry Christmas, happy New Year and wonderful holiday season. He agrees with what Mrs. Hernandez said about freedom of speech. We all have phones and e-mail addresses, please contact any of us with your concerns. Our phone numbers and e-mail addresses can be found on our website. Plans and priorities will be discussed at our Board workshop. He looks forward to developing a new set of priorities with the Board.

Mr. Rutledge requested via the Chair to the Policy Committee Chair to explore a social media policy for the Board of Education.

Mr. Rutledge requested via the Chair to the Superintendent to look into adding monitors,

electronic or digital on our buses to keep our kids safe.

Mr. Rutledge requested via the Chair to the Superintendent to expand the opportunity to develop partnerships and internships. This provides a hands-on learning experience for our students.

Mrs. LeBlanc is the JFK liaison. She attended her first JFK PTO meeting. The JFK PTO is selling winter hats with the new Patriot logo for \$20. They will also hold a purse bingo on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you are interested in purchasing a hat, you can order one at [jfkmiddleschool.pto@gmail.com](mailto:jfkmiddleschool.pto@gmail.com). It would be nice to see us wear some JFK gear.

Mrs. LeBlanc attended our new pre-thanksgiving football game - the Route 5 Rivalry Game against South Windsor. Enfield lost but the game was great. Next year, the game will be played at South Windsor. It was cold, but the event was well attended. The band was there. She is glad to see this come back to the school.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the grade 8 band contest will be held on Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. She went to the Veteran's Day Parade and saw the students play. They did an excellent job.

Mrs. LeBlanc would like to clarify one thing – the JFK progress reports will be going home with the students and the parents will receive information regarding the student portals to get into PowerSchool. Will the login information be the same? Mr. Drezek stated that is correct.

Mrs. LeBlanc agrees with Mr. Rutledge that the Board needs a social media policy and it needs to be strictly enforced. You may be speaking for yourself, but you are really representing the 9 of us.

Mrs. LeBlanc appreciates audience participation and you coming to tonight's meeting. Your mission for us to hear your concerns was received. She depends on the new Board to give her new perspective and to look outside of the box. She heard your priorities – vision, priorities, appropriate school facilities, indoor air quality, early childhood, high school expectations, community calendar and behavior specialists. You all shared some really good points with us.

Mrs. LeBlanc added we will be working on our Board goals and priorities at our workshop. She has also heard from other community members about the second audience participation. We added the second audience participation to our agenda to model what the Town Council was doing. This will be discussed further with the Board. We all ran on a platform of transparency and want to hear from our residents and parents. She enjoys hearing from you and does not always agree with you. It is hard to not take this personally. We all know why we ran for office.

Mrs. LeBlanc wished Board members, Central Office Staff and Administrators a safe and happy holiday. Thank you.

Mr. Neville thanked Lori Gates for her involvement with Wreaths Across America. She has done so much for our servicemen and women. It was nice that the drivers are going to stop at Parkman again.

Mr. Neville congratulated our student athletes. Recognizing our athletes is the right thing to do.

Mr. Neville reminded everyone about the Rachel's Challenge Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, December 16 at 8:00 AM at St. Patrick's Church Hall. It is nice to see so many positive things that have come from a tragedy.

Mr. Neville stated our early childhood program is a highlight for the community and us. Other communities are coming to us about our program. This makes us look good.

Mr. Neville questions the class numbers at the elementary level. We have acted quickly regarding behavior concerns. This program has just started. He would like an update on this program. It is important to know that a problem was identified, and the administration came up with a way to address it rather quickly. We know this program will continue to evolve and we need to keep this discussion going. We are not just sitting on our hands doing nothing. It won't be perfect, but it will evolve.

Mr. Neville appreciates audience members coming to the meetings. We need to hear from you. We will discuss what you said at our Board workshop. The audience issue bothers him. Communication is very important. Taking away an opportunity for audience members to speak is a concern. We will continue this discussion at our workshop. We need to hear from the public.

Mr. Neville wished everyone a happy holiday and enjoy the time with your families. Thank you.

Mr. Ryder reminded everyone about the Rachel's Challenge Pancake Breakfast at St. Patrick's Church Hall. After this, the Hazardville Memorial students will hold a book fair at the Enfield Barnes & Nobel. The students will perform from 10-2 PM. A percentage of all book sales will go to the Hazardville Memorial PTO One Book, One School program.

Mr. Ryder added that he has attended 10 different kinds of meetings since our last Board meeting. Everything he is doing is trying to make our schools better. That is why he ran for office.

Mr. Ryder stated he attended a PTO President's Meeting with the Superintendent on December 6<sup>th</sup>. We have coordinated events and programs at the K-2 and 3-5 schools to make it easier for parents with students in multiple schools.

Mr. Ryder is also a Parent Leadership Academy member and you can contact him for more information about this program. They will hold a retreat in February and classes will start in the new year at the Stowe Early Learning Center.

Mr. Ryder added Kite's Enfield Plays On will hold a program at the Middle Road Library on December 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM – Noon Year's Eve Party for preschool through grade 3 students. This way our youngest students can celebrate with their families.

Mr. Ryder is the liaison at Eli Whitney school. They will hold a spirit week next week. The students are quite excited about the different kind of school events that are held.

Mr. Ryder met with the EFEE group. They would like to attend an upcoming Board meeting and explain about their organization. They would like to bring some past grant recipients and what they did with their money. We are looking at February 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ryder wished everyone a safe, happy holiday and a happy New Year!

Mr. Regnier expressed a heartfelt remembrance to our Newtown friends. They lost 26 lives. It is sad to remember such a tragic anniversary that occurred on December 14, 2012. There were so many brave individuals that were in that school on that horrible day. There are many brave individuals that fight for our kids every day. He wishes them all well.

Mrs. Riley congratulated the student athletes for all their hard work and dedication. She thanked her fellow Board members who attended the CAFE training sessions last week. It was



an all-day event that was very informative.

Mrs. Riley thanked the audience members for coming to the Board meeting and for your comments. We will discuss your concerns at our Board workshop.

Mrs. Riley stated she made a comment about the JFK building and the Town Council. There is a synergy between the two - the Board and the Town Council. She wants to make sure you get to the correct place at the quickest amount of time. My comment was not meant to be insensitive. The members on the JFK pre-referendum committee did a tremendous job and a lot of hard-work was put into this committee. She is here to help in anyway.

Mrs. Depeau agrees with looking into a social media policy and setting standards for Board members to adhere to. She wholeheartedly supports this. She looks forward to discussing these items at the Board's workshop. She will get back to you with facts and information.

Mrs. Depeau thanked the audience members for their comments. You brought your passions to us. We are here because of our passions and when our passions meet your passions, we can find solutions. She can also be reached anytime by e-mail or by phone. We need to hear from you.

Mrs. Depeau stated she is the liaison to Enfield Street school. They will hold a Penguin Patch Holiday Shopping on December 18th. They are looking for volunteers to help the students.

Chairman Kruzel stated he is the Prudence Crandall liaison. They are holding a PTO meeting tonight.

Chairman Kruzel stated the Wreaths Across America ceremony will be held on Saturday at noon at St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Chairman Kruzel wished everyone a happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, happy New Year and we will see you all here next year.

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

**11. NEW BUSINESS - None**

**12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported that the Curriculum Committee will not be meeting on December 20<sup>th</sup> due to a conflict with another committee meeting. We will be setting our meeting dates soon.

b. Finance Committee

Mrs. Riley reported the Finance Committee will meet on December 19, 2017.

c. Policy Committee

Mr. Regnier reported the Policy Committee will meet on January 2, 2018.

d. Leadership Committee

Mr. Kruzel reported the Board Leadership met tonight and we will continue our discussions at the upcoming workshop on December 18<sup>th</sup>. We are going to try to hold more Leadership

meetings in the future on a regular basis.

e. Joint Facilities Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported that we heard from the Joint Facilities Committee tonight.

f. Building Committee

Mr. Kruzel reported the EHS Building Committee will meet on December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Rutledge that the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2017 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-1** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc abstaining.

**14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL - None**

**15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None**

**16. AUDIENCES - None**

**17. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Riley to adjourn the Regular Meeting of December 12, 2017.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Tina LeBlanc  
Secretary  
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary