

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 23, 2020**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was virtually on June 23, 2020.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Walter Kruzel.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Walter Kruzel
3. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY: Jonathan LeBlanc, Bill Salazar, Chris Rutledge, Wendy Costa, Tina LeBlanc, Joyce Hall, Stacy Thurston, Scott Ryder and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher Drezek, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

a. **EPS School Update**

Mr. Drezek expressed his gratitude to the Enfield Public School family for their support of his family during this difficult time. He thanked the members of the Board for their continued support. Both Mr. Longey and I explain this to our new hires about being part of a family. Your support during this time has been overwhelming and nothing has been more evident. He has received many well wishes from the entire Enfield community and other communities. Thank you.

Mr. Drezek thanked Mr. Longey for everything he has done for him during this time. He has been a rock and he wanted to publicly thank him.

Mr. Drezek reminded the public that you can view the Enfield High School virtual graduation on ETV. Mrs. Clark and her team exceeded our expectations. They did a phenomenal job planning and executing the graduation. We have received nothing but positive feedback about the graduation. He added that we wanted to recognize our graduates and provide them with the best possible experience we could. Nothing can beat a real graduation, but this was as good as we could get. He thanked Mrs. Clark and her team for everything they did for our graduates.

Mr. Drezek stated the Town Council has been discussing changing our worker's compensation and liability carrier. The Town manager has kept in contact with me regarding these discussions. They are exploring going back to CIRMA our previous insurance carrier. I will keep you posted with any future developments.

Mr. Drezek stated our iPads have arrived. We are currently working on a plan for distribution. We were lucky and ordered them before everyone else. A lot of other districts are looking for devices. We also received the final application for the Federal Cares Act. We now know how we will pay for the iPads.

Mr. Drezek stated there are a lot of questions relating to opening in September. The Education Commissioner is expected to make an announcement regarding schools on Thursday. There are a lot of speculations. We will know better once we receive the guidelines. There are many

spikes that are popping up around the country. He will share more once he knows something.

Mr. Drezek added we are trying to get back to normalcy. We have been discussing when we will start holding in person meetings. He is planning to open the central staff offices back up after July 4th. Our staff has done a fantastic job using social distancing and working virtually. We have been staggering some staff coming in the various departments. There will be restrictions that will be put in place. We will also need a cleaning schedule. We need some staff at central office to address questions from the public during the summer and as we gear up for the start of school. This plan will be forthcoming. The Town Hall has also opened with restrictions.

b. Youth Virtual Culinary Institute 2020 – as presented

Mr. LeBlanc welcomed back Mr. Drezek.

Mr. Salazar stated he asked about this at a Curriculum meeting. He would like to know the number of students that did not submit instructional packets. Mr. Drezek stated the building principals will be gathering this information. We will send something out when we receive this information.

Mr. Salazar also welcomed Mr. Drezek back.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated that several Board members have commented about meeting in person. She attended the School Reopening Committee and members from B&G stated we most likely will not be meeting back at Town Hall until mid-August. She agrees that we need to start meeting again in person. She would like us to have the option to call in virtually to meetings. We need to take into consideration that some of us might still need to meet remotely due to self-quarantining and anticipating the second wave of COVID. We need to be mindful of what we are saying.

Chairman Kruzel added he heard the same thing, the middle of August before we might meet together. This is all tentative.

Mr. Ryder also welcomed Mr. Drezek back. He thanked Mr. Longey for filling in for Mr. Drezek and answering all our questions. You did a great job.

Chairman Kruzel agreed with all the Board member comments.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Policy Revision #9132 Bylaws of the Board – Standing Committees – Second Reading

Mr. Rutledge moved, seconded by Mr. Salazar that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy Revision #9132 Bylaws of the Board – Standing Committees as a second and final reading.

Discussion:

Mrs. Costa would like a correction made on line #52 – change tow to two.

A vote by **roll call 5-4-0** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Thurston and Mr. Ryder in dissent.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Policy Revision #6145 Eligibility – Extracurricular Activities – Gr. 6-12 – First Reading

Mr. Rutledge moved, seconded by Mr. Salazar that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy Revision #6145 Eligibility – Extracurricular Activities – Gr. 6-12 as a first reading.

Discussion:

Mrs. Costa questioned the recommended 1.7 grade point average (GPA). She feels this is a bit low. She does not want to see us lowering this average just so students can play sports. She feels education is primary and playing sports is secondary. She does not want us to set the bar too low.

Mr. Ryder stated the 1.7 is the GPA. The 4.0 was never changed previously.

Mr. Rutledge added that Mrs. Costa has brought up an interesting point. Colleges require a higher GPA to be eligible to play sports. He would like to know how many students are not eligible due to the GPA requirements or are on the brink. He agrees that our primary purpose is to educate. He is not diminishing sports by any means. It would be interesting to see the data on how this policy impacts our students.

Mr. Salazar asked for clarification – you would like to know how many student athletes did not qualify.

Mr. Rutledge stated the policy indicated students needed to maintain a C- or better GPA or 1.7 to eligible to participate. He would be interested to see how many students did not qualify or were on the brink.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we cannot compare college GPA's to high school GPA's. She asked if the CIAC dictates the GPA that schools use. Mr. Longey stated the CIAC tells us what the minimum GPA is.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated our coaches require the players to be accountable for their grades and report to the coaches weekly. If their grades are slipping, they are assigned Tier I, II and III assistance with their teachers during Eagle Hour for extra help. If they miss meetings or do not make improvements, they will not be allowed to participate during the week. Enfield high has done a tremendous job being proactive with their student athletes as a preventative measure. If a student has all A's and is struggling in one class, the student is expected to get help during Eagle Hour. The Tier level the student is assigned, will dictate the numbers of times during Eagle Hour they need to meet each week.

Mrs. Costa stated the CIAC recommended GPA is 1.7 but many school districts have increased that. It is nice that we are holding our students accountable. She still questions if 1.7 is the correct number for us.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she can see that other districts might increase the GPA requirements. Knowing parents, they will go directly to the CIAC website for the minimum GPA. She is comfortable with this GPA since it is coming from the GIAC.

Mr. Longey stated we are trying to get through the 6000 series this year. The Policy committee can always revisit this policy. Tonight, we need to make this change so the high school can calculate GPA's. The high school needs the eligibility list for fall athletics. If this is something the Board would like to pursue later, let him know. We would need to form a subcommittee and include coaches and our Athletic Director if you would like to make changes regarding the GPA. They can give you the data you are looking for.

Mr. Drezek stated that is the recommended minimum GPA from the CIAC. He understands the Boards concern about raising the bar. Some of our student athletes are barely making the minimum GPA so they can play a sport. Board members may recall our fall athletic presentation where the athletes attend a Board meeting. Our Athletic Director Cory O'Connell provides the percentages of eligible students. He recalls it being around 98%. Our coaches and teachers are doing a great job making sure our athletes are eligible.

Mr. Rutledge asked if the high school needs us to approve this policy urgently? Mr. Longey stated the eligibility list is also run at the same time in as the report cards. They will base the eligibility from 5 ½ credits or 5b of the policy. They cannot run this yet without violating Board policy. They need this change to be made.

Mr. Rutledge stated we can speed up the process if needed and waive the second reading. Mr. Longey stated it is not critical to do it all tonight.

Chairman Kruzel stated we can place this on the July 7th agenda for the second reading.

A vote by **roll call 8-1-0** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc in dissent.

b. Approve 2020-21 Healthy Food Certification

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education elects not to certify the 2020-21 Healthy Food Certification.

Discussion:

Chairman Kruzel stated in the past, we have chosen not to certify due to the restrictions that would be imposed if we certified.

Mr. Drezek stated this is an annual action the Board is required to take. Mrs. Edwards provided the Board with a memo stating that our school lunch program meets all Federal and State nutrition guidelines. If we chose to certify, there is an additional set of requirements that would need to be followed and could jeopardize our reimbursements for our nutrition program. Your vote to not certify will allow us to continue as is. We just wanted to make sure you know our school lunch program meets all Federal and State guidelines.

Chairman Kruzel stated your yes vote will ensure that we will not certify.

Mr. Salazar stated he just wants to make sure he understands this correctly. The State requires us to do this certification yearly.

Mr. Drezek stated the Board of Education must vote on this each year. If we vote to certify the Healthy Food Certification, we would be bound by State requirements. We would not be able to sell food at Athletic games or provide monthly birthday celebrations. That is why we always say we are meeting all Federal and State nutrition guidelines. Our school lunches meet all guidelines. If we certify, we can jeopardize any reimbursements we currently are receiving. It sounds confusing. We have never certified due to the restrictions that would need to be followed.

Chairman Kruzel added one year we printed the document and it was many, many pages just for us to look at it to vote no.

Mr. Salazar stated this is something the State requires us to do yearly. Mr. Drezek added the State is making the Board vote yes or no. The recommendation is to not certify the Healthy Food Certification.

Mr. LeBlanc stated by voting yes, we are actually voting to not certify. Chairman Kruzel stated that is correct.

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

c. Discussion and Action, if any, regarding Adopting the FY2020-21 Budget

Mr. Drezek stated since this is technically the last meeting of the fiscal year, the Board will need to vote on the budget we will be presenting to the Town. We are presenting a 0% budget. The Town will appropriate a 0% increase with a 2% carryover contingency for next year. There is also a caveat that once the State settles the ECS cost formula, the Town will share that with us. We will not receive this figure until the middle of the summer. The Town Council made an additional appropriation for us last year. This will be done the same way this year once the ECS funding is finalized.

Chairman Kruzel stated the State approves a bi-annual budget. We should receive an increase from the State, but changes could be made at any time.

Mr. Drezek stated there was an additional \$400K in the bi-annual budget last time. Our last conversations with them was to carry that budget forward. The fiscal picture in the State is grimmer during the last 3-months. Until they bang the gavel and appropriate the funding to municipalities, he would not be comfortable counting on it. He is comfortable with the word of the Town Council that they will pass on to the schools any additional funding they receive. The Town Council has done that the past 3 years. The legislature can make changes fiscally.

Mrs. Costa moved, seconded by Mr. Rutledge that the Enfield Board of Education adopts the FY2020-21 Budget presented by the Town Council.

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

7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Chairman Kruzel stated he attended 4 of the drive-thru graduation sessions. They were phenomenal. The EHS team thought of everything. The weather was perfect on both days. The graduates had fun and he believes that everyone enjoyed it. The processions were orderly and done by the book. He thanked them for a great job. He spoke to the JI reporter who has covered several other town ceremonies and he thought we did a great job.

Mr. LeBlanc watched the virtual graduation procession from home. It was fantastic. It was nice hearing the graduate's comments. He congratulated all the graduates.

Mr. LeBlanc stated Chief Fox gave a presentation to the Town Council. He spoke about what our police department does. Our EPD is fully accredited. They are doing a tremendous job with our youth. The Enfield Explorers program is the oldest one in Connecticut and the second oldest in the United States. Our Youth Academy is a two-week program for children ages 10-13. They also offer an internship program for high school and college age students. Our Enfield Police Department is doing a tremendous job. We also have SRO's that mentor our students while they are in school.

Mr. LeBlanc stated the CIAC is recommending each school district forms a committee for starting sports up in the fall. The sports schedules for the fall were just released. It is good to see sporting events are being scheduled again. Our first EHS freshman football game is on September 10th.

Mr. LeBlanc would like to know what we are doing to keep in touch with our students over the summer especially the students that were struggling to complete their packets during the

school year. We need to look in on these kids and get them geared up for school in the fall.

Mr. Salazar congratulated all our students for the end of another school year. This has been a historical year and we are all looking forward to a better year. He agrees that the graduation production was great. He thanked everyone involved with this. He has not heard of any negative comments about the virtual graduation ceremony. He hopes the students and the families were satisfied with it. They deserved to be acknowledged for their academic accomplishments. It was well done. He congratulated the 2020 graduates.

Mr. Salazar commented on missing student packets as mentioned by Mr. LeBlanc. Unfortunately, some students will not improve if we are distance learning in the next school year. We need to look into what is missing for them and what we can do to prepare them in the summer for the next school year. We need to make sure they are actively participating.

Mr. Salazar stated our Enfield Police Explorers are the 2nd oldest in the United States and oldest in Connecticut. This is just another reason why we are so proud of Enfield. He thanked Mr. LeBlanc for sharing this information.

Mr. Rutledge congratulated all the students and school system for how we handled this past school year. Everyone needed to adapt. It wasn't easy and we need to continue moving forward. We need to build on what we did last year and make necessary improvements. He thanked everyone for their patience and perseverance. We have our school reopening committee and our distance learning plans wasn't something we ever did before. If distance learning is needed again, he encourages us to reach out to colleges and universities that have been successfully doing online education. They could help us with resources or different ways to do things. This is something his employer does. We could take some lessons from them

Mrs. Costa watched the virtual awards ceremony. Everyone did a phenomenal job. The hosts, Mr. & Mrs. Mazzone were very entertaining. All the staff involved should be commended for a job well done. They made lemonade out of lemons.

Mrs. Costa also attended the drive-thru graduation ceremony. This event was well-planned, and the students really enjoyed it. She also watched the virtual graduation ceremony at home. She thanked everyone involved for making this a memorable event for our graduates. Nothing can replace a traditional graduation, but this was done well. Thank you.

Mrs. Costa also attended several virtual CAFE meetings over the past two weeks were representatives discussed reopening and the challenges surrounding this. She also attended a session called "Dear School Boards, Your Students and Staff of Color are not okay" that was presented by Dr. Marth Brackeen-Harris. She was looking for more concrete suggestions to be given but it gave us different perspectives and generated a lot of conversations.

Mrs. LeBlanc welcomed Mr. Drezek back. You and your family were in our hearts and prayers. We appreciated Mr. Longey's patience while you were out.

Mrs. LeBlanc congratulated the Enfield High School 2020 graduates. It was not a traditional graduation, but everyone did a great job. Parents were able to get out of the cars to take pictures. They made the ceremony as personal as they could. There was a lot of Eagle pride there. Parents were very thankful. The weather was perfect.

Mrs. LeBlanc also watched the virtual awards ceremony. Mr. & Mrs. Mazzone were wonderful hosts. She enjoyed seeing the staff involved with this ceremony and about the students plans. She also watched the virtual graduation ceremony. The staff wanted to see the students and see the students graduate. A lot of the staff delivered signs to the graduate's homes. She thanked the Enfield High staff, parents and students for everything.

Mrs. LeBlanc added that both she and Mr. Ryder made a video of them visiting schools thanking parents and staff. We can send you the video if you would like to see it. We had a lot of fun making this. We just wanted to share our thanks for the end of another school year.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated some Doctor's Offices have cancelled sports physicals for student athletes. The CIAC is not giving athletes a break on this. Sports physicals will need to be completed within the 13 months. She contacted our Athletic Director Mr. O'Connell about this. If there are any changes, he will let us know.

Mrs. LeBlanc commented that we have received a lot of correspondence about having our subcommittee and Board meetings where audience members can phone in. It sounds like we will not have any in person meetings until mid-August. She would also like us to explore different options for the public to view our meetings.

Mrs. LeBlanc also watched at the CABE webinar with Mr. Martha Brackeen-Harris. This made you self-reflect. Dr. Martha made excellent points. Our kids are willing to take on more. This generation will teach us and will pass it on down. She spoke about many poignant topics like the Equity Toolkit.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated prior to the pandemic, we had reached out to CABE about their Equity Toolkit. The Board adopted this, but we haven't had a chance to work with it yet. Dr. Brackeen-Harris suggested we read a poem "Wearing a Mask".

Mrs. LeBlanc added that Dr. Brackeen-Harris said our youth are replacing the images of George Floyd with people they know. This becomes very scary to them. This work will be ongoing. You can watch this webinar on the CABE website under professional development. She is committed to looking at things differently and representing everyone.

Mrs. LeBlanc wished everyone a safe and healthy summer. She knows our Central Office staff will be working very hard for us during the summer months.

Mrs. Hall also watched the CABE webinar and agrees wholeheartedly with everything Mrs. LeBlanc and Mrs. Costa said.

Mrs. Hall added the virtual graduation ceremony was impressive as well as the virtual awards ceremony. There were so many awards given out.

Mrs. Hall has asked a number of people about what they remember about their graduation. Other than walking down the hill, she couldn't find anyone that had such a memorable graduation than the 2020 graduates. In some respects, our graduates are very lucky with the drive-thru and virtual ceremony. Graduates that have not made any definite plans to further their education can register at community colleges and attend for free. The Board of regents has an allotment of funds available at community colleges. You must submit your application by July 15th. Please share this information to anyone you might know.

Mrs. Hall stated we have held several Head Start Policy Committee meetings. We discussed summer sessions and students that will be entering Kindergarten in the fall. They will offer virtual sessions to prepare the students for entering school. They will also have kits available for the students.

Mrs. Hall congratulated Mr. LeBlanc for his well-written editorial that was published in the Journal Inquirer.

Mrs. Hall stated that she has received 2 anonymous letters. If you have a good idea that we need to listen to, please let us know who you are.

Chairman Kruzel also has received anonymous letters.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked Mrs. Hall for her kind words.

Mrs. Thurston congratulated all the graduates. Her husband drove her cousin to the drive-thru graduation ceremony. He was beaming when he came home. He said it was so much fun to be part of this. She watched the virtual ceremony and was also impressed with it. She has spoken to several people about their virtual graduations and they were jealous of what Enfield did. She congratulated Mrs. Clark and her team for everything they did for our graduates. They went above and beyond. She is very proud to be part of this Board especially now for everything we have been doing for our kids.

Mrs. Thurston also welcomed Mr. Drezek back.

Mr. Ryder stated many parents were concerned about the graduation ceremony for their child and having a memorable ceremony. What Mrs. Clark and her team did was amazing. It was nice to hear the comments the students made at the virtual graduation ceremony. What Enfield High School did was great. He congratulated all the 2020 graduates from Enfield High School and Enfield Adult Education. This was Adult Education's 100th graduation ceremony. He thanked all our graduates.

Mr. Ryder added that Enfield Adult Education is available on Facebook and Twitter. They will be holding summer hours. You can call 860-763-7032 for information or you can go to www.enfieldpto.com. They will be adding to their program offerings in the fall.

Mr. Ryder wished all our fathers a Happy Father's Day. He thanked everyone at our K-8 schools for everything they have done for our kids. You all went above and beyond reaching out to our kids saying goodbye for the summer. Thank you for what you did for our kids, it was very special. He welcomed all the incoming pre-school and Kindergarten students.

Mr. Ryder added the JFK yearbooks have been delayed. We will get the word out once they are available.

Mr. Ryder thanked the Enfield Public Schools staff and administration for what you have done. Thank you for helping. This was a stressful time for everyone.

Mr. Ryder asked about the July 7th meeting. Chairman Kruzel stated he will discuss this under the JFK Building Committee report.

Chairman Kruzel also thanked the members of the Enfield Police Department that were at the graduation ceremony. Our members of EPD are great and are top notch as mentioned by Mr. LeBlanc.

Chairman Kruzel stated he visited Enfield Street, Henry Barnard, Hazardville Memorial and Eli Whitney for their student pick-up days. He thanked the staff for everything they have done on behalf of the nine of us. We have phenomenal staff in this town and in our schools. Since March, it has been a difficult time for everyone. We are Enfield and we got through this and are always on top of it. We will keep working on this. We are a team of 9 and we all put our time in and do what is best for our kids.

8. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum Committee – Mr. Salazar reported the Curriculum Committee met virtually on June 18th at 5:30 PM. We discussed Project Lead the Way and updates for the Curriculum plan for next year. Ms. Middleton also discussed updates and enhancements coming from Microsoft. Our next meeting will be held on July 2nd.

Finance, Budget Committee – Mrs. Costa reported the Finance, Budget Committee met virtually June 15th. We met with representatives from Wolff Financial Group and discussed Title III grants. We also discussed meeting in person at Alcorn. We will be approving financial reports later on the agenda.

Policy Committee – Mr. Rutledge reported the Policy Committee met virtually on June 16th. We continued reviewing the 5000 series. We also received several policies from CAFE that pertain to current situations like meeting virtually. He is looking to schedule a meeting to review these policies. He would like to include the meeting link for people to attend our next Policy Committee meeting virtually.

Leadership Committee – None

Joint Facilities Committee – Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Facilities committee will meet virtually on June 25th. We are also working on the 3rd phase for Barnard's Roof and the other school roofs.

JFK Building Committee – Chairman Kruzel reported the JFK Building Committee met on June 11th. We need to submit the FF&E package to the State by July 9th. He is requesting the Board meet on Tuesday, July 7th. We can move the July 14th meeting to July 7th if there are no objections. We can discuss and approve this item that needs to be submitted to the State by July 9th.

Joint Security Committee – Mr. Rutledge reported the Joint Security Committee will meet next on September 2nd.

Mr. Rutledge stated that Mr. LeBlanc left the meeting at 6:52 PM. He lost his internet connection.

School Reopen Committee – Mrs. Costa reported the School Reopen Committee met virtually on June 17th. Representatives from Building and Grounds attended. We discussed general topics including cleaning and social distancing and the impacts for classroom sizes. We are still waiting for the formal guideline from the State. Once we receive this, we will focus on specific items. Our next virtual meeting will be held on June 30th.

Joint Insurance Committee – Chairman Kruzel reported they are currently looking in our property and casualty insurance and we may be switching insurance carriers. This will be discussed at a future date.

Mr. Drezek stated he has continued conversations with Mr. Radar from CAFE about continuing with our Equity Toolkit. Dr. Martha Brackeen-Harris was going to be our facilitator. He has spoken to her and hopes she will still be our facilitator once we can schedule this again.

Mrs. LeBlanc added she is amazing and would love to meet with her.

Chairman Kruzel looks forward to this.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. Hall that the Special Meeting Minutes of June 9, 2020 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

10. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL:

Mrs. Costa moved seconded by Mrs. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of May 2020, total expenditures amount to \$6,186,270.88, broken down between payroll totaling \$4,337,592.11 and other accounts totaling \$1,848,678.77. 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.

Mrs. Costa moved seconded by Mrs. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of May 2020, total grant Head Start expenditures amount to \$344,936.17, broken down between payroll totaling \$322,927.10 and other accounts totaling \$22,009.07. 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

11. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNITON: - None

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. Costa to adjourn the Special Virtual Meeting of June 23, 2020.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary