

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 26, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on March 26, 2019.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Regnier, Ashley Depeau, Chris Rutledge, Tina LeBlanc, Tim Neville, Scott Ryder and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Charlotte Riley, Sarah Hernandez and Scott Ryder

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. **Board Appreciation Presentation**

Mr. Drezek stated tonight we are recognizing our Board members and for everything they do for our students, staff and community. This is Board appreciation month and there are several gifts for the Board. There was a slight glitch with all the gifts arriving here tonight. So, we will continue this appreciation through next month.

Mr. Drezek welcomed Jaclyn Valley, our PK STEAM Academy Coordinator and some of her students to tonight's meeting. Ms. Valley thanked the Board for everything they have done for our students. They have worked on an art project with bottle caps and have gifts for the Board.

Mrs. Moncuse stated the students have made nifty gifts with the bottle caps and beads creating different kinds of patterns. She gave each Board member a flyer. The students gave each Board member a bottle cap to hang.

Chairman Kruzel personally thanked the students for the gifts.

Mr. Drezek stated this year, Ms. Valley wanted to bring the "tiny humans" to a Board meeting. The other schools have a reprieve until next year. He thanked everyone in the PK-Steam program, members from KITE and ECDC for the great partnership we have at the Stowe Early Learning Center.

Ms. Valley and Mr. Bourassa showed Board members a video of the students from the PK Steam Academy. Mr. Bourassa added that we will post this video on the website and will send it out to Board members.

Chairman Kruzel thanked all our “little humans” for coming to the Board meeting and for our gifts. This is why we are here, and this is why we are doing this.

b. 2018-19 Winter Student Athletic Recognition

Mr. Drezek welcomed Cory O’Connell, our K-12 Athletic Director to tonight’s meeting. Mr. O’Connell thanked the Board for this opportunity. He thanked our coaches and our athletes for all their hard work and dedication. He stated that 99.5 % of our student athletes maintained academic eligibility with 42% of the student athletes maintaining High Honors and Honors during the 2018-19 Winter Season. He added that we will hold our “Next Level Ceremony” for Division I, II and III athletes that will be continuing their athletic careers at the collegiate level at the end of May 2019. We also have signing dates for Division I and II athletes. He will share these dates with the Board once they are finalized. We will hold an Enfield High Boys Baseball Game vs. East Granby at 3:30 PM on May 22, 2019 at Dunkin Donuts Park.

Mr. O’Connell stated that each coach will give an update about our athletic teams and accomplishments.

JFK

Girls Basketball, Coach Maggie Sayers
CT River Athletic League Champions

EHS

Girls Cheerleading, Coach Jacqueline Jefferies & Tashia
Third Place

Ice Hockey, Coach Frank Genovese
Patrick Fleming - First Team Division 3 All State and CCC South All Conference
Zach Hacia CCC South All Conference

Wrestling, Coach Andrew Dupere
CCC East All Conference
Eli Pelkey
Justin Beiler
Sean Messina
Colin Caron
Shawn Keeler
Tallon Stager
Greg Bogdan
Nick Miller
Alex Martinez

Girls Basketball, Coach Jay Gaucher
Cassie Urso – ShopRite kindness award
Kaitlyn Bourque – All-Rotary team

Boys Indoor Track, Coach Mike Tiroletto and Assistant Coach Amy Bartholomew

Boys Basketball, Coach Kevin Zalucki and Assistant Coach Mike James
Kyle Menaker – All-CCC

Boys Swimming, Coach Rubin (was unable to attend)

Mr. O’Connell thanked the students and coaches for attending tonight. Go Eagles!

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she has seen tremendous growth with the program and with our athletes since merging the two high schools. She likes the emphasis on good grades and our student athletes being good role models. She likes seeing our older students from the Football, Baseball and Basketball teams working with our younger students. Having our athletes work with our youth develops a sense of community. Our cheerleading coaches are doing a great job. She enjoyed seeing the cheerleaders perform at games. Our coaches are also doing a great job. Hearing from the coaches about our student's academic accomplishments is important. There is a sense of Eagle Pride in our community and in our schools. Thank you all for representing Enfield proudly.

Chairman Kruzal stated we have a motto in Enfield – We make a difference in Enfield, every child, every day. This proves it here tonight hearing about what our students are doing. Thank you for what you are all doing.

c. Enfield Legislators

Mr. Drezek and Chairman Kruzal welcomed our Enfield Legislation Delegation members Senator Kissel, Representative Hall and Representative Arnone.

Senator Kissel thanked the Board for inviting them. We are also here for the “little humans” and student athletes. Being here tonight is uplifting. Hartford can be a tough place fighting for the things we need and don't need. He is proud to be here representing Enfield. He is glad to see the JFK money is in the bill right behind Bridgeport. This bill has legs behind it. We received news today regarding bonding for the sewage plant. This will relieve some stress on the town budget. He agrees that forcing regionalization is a bad idea.

Representative Hall thanked the Board for the invitation. It was nice seeing the students. She is glad we were last tonight to see all the students. This is something she truly misses. She is on the appropriations committee. ECS's cost sharing numbers have increased. She reviewed the Governor's current budget numbers. The numbers are looking favorable this year compared to what we saw last year. She is also on the public safety committee and higher education committee. She will keep Mr. Drezek informed as we go through the budget process.

Representative Arnone also thanked the Board for the invitation. It is great seeing the students and hearing about all the community service projects that are going on with our youth. He added that funding is up with our regular funding and ECS funding through 2028. We have been discussing regionalization and are not in favor of this but are in favor of regionalizing shared services. Enfield is the leader of shared services. We are ahead of the curve and this can help us in the long end. He commends the Board and the Town for working together using shared services. He reviewed the teacher pension bill and the graduation requirements bill #6890 with the Board. He will also keep Mr. Drezek informed as he hears new developments with the budget.

Mr. Neville thanked them for coming. He resents pensions coming back to the Town's. The pension fund has been underfunded since 1948. He feels this should go into a lockbox just like what they are doing with the transportation fund.

Mr. Neville asked about the tolls and how much will we get from doing this? If we don't get the tolls where will they go to fill this need from?

Senator Kissel does not support the tolls being installed on I-91. This will force people to use the side roads and this will cause more congestion. They are looking for around \$800 million from the tolls. This will be a tax increase for CT tax payers any way you look at it. This is a priority project to keep our roads and bridges safe. We will hold a public forum about the tolls at JFK. He would like to see the tolls placed on I-84 and I-95 where it will not have such a general negative impact.

Representative Hall agrees with what Senator Kissel said. She hopes you can all attend the April 16th public hearing at JFK. She also agrees with Senator Kissel regarding the teacher pensions coming back to the town. This is something her caucus is totally against. These are two items she does not support.

Representative Arnone stated there are several proposed bills for the tolls. Two of the three bills list the actual highways they are proposing the tolls be placed on. The process allows for amendments. Now it is our job to make amendments as we work through the process. We could end up with only certain highways with tolls or they could be on all the highways. We will see what developments over the next couple of months. We are committed to work for what is best for Enfield. He added that no state has tolls on every highway.

Mr. Neville stressed the importance of where the cuts will come from. When he goes to Maine, there are tolls all the way up on I-95. They are looking for money and the money will come from somewhere. He didn't like what they were proposing last year. The cuts were coming from the needy who needed the funding the most.

Representative Arnone stated the funds raised from the tolls would be just used for transportation and infrastructure.

Senator Kissel stated we are your Enfield delegation and we are fighting for Enfield and are speaking as one voice. It is a pleasure working with both Representatives Hall and Arnone.

Mr. Rutledge asked if you are looking at other sources of revenue to help spread the tax burden like the lodging tax introduced by Representative Arnone. He is concerned with Bill #431 and property taxes. How will the town make up this funding source? We want to make sure our schools are properly funded.

Senator Kissel opposes this bill shifting the money to other areas and towns. This is a huge issue in Windsor Locks regarding property taxes due to all the car rental businesses needed from travelers coming to and from Bradley International Airport. This is a bad idea.

Representative Hall agrees with Senator Kissel and does not support this bill. She does not feel this bill will proceed. This bill will affect the entire state.

Representative Arnone added that approximately 5000 bills come out every year. A portion of the hotel tax will go the towns. This is one of the bills coming from Windsor Locks. This is a small way to help local towns. We are seeing similar proposed bills for revenue streaming.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked them for discussing the tolls and not supporting this being implemented on all our highways. She rides or commutes into Hartford every day. The last few years the state budget was challenging. She is hoping things are going a bit smoother this time. She also thanked them for representing Enfield and for keeping us informed.

Representative Hall added the Enfield delegation works well together. There are no big egos here and we are focused on what our towns need. We do not want to go down the same road again. The budget needs some work especially with the teacher pension portion. The governor's commitment to municipalities and education has been encouraging.

Mrs. LeBlanc added that it is helpful that both Representatives Hall and Arnone were on the Town Council. You both understand know what we are looking for and how hard it is living in Connecticut.

Representative Hall is on top of the budget and Enfield is on the top of our radar.

Representative Arnone added that as the Governor was presenting his budget, he was e-mailing

Mr. Drezek with the numbers.

Mr. Regnier asked about the traffic light at the top of the entrance to Enfield High School on Enfield Street and what is the hold up or what do we need to do to get this installed? He is concerned about the safety for our students.

Representative Hall stated we had some staffing changes with the town and state. We left this in the Town's hand. The commissioner was going to be reimbursed from the town for the cost. This is what the deal was with the DOT.

Representative Arnone stated that is correct. It was left in the Town manager's hands. There was a new Town manager. There were some additional talks with the DOT and Town Manager. We are back on this. He will contact them tomorrow morning about this.

Representative Hall stated there is also a new DOT commissioner. She will also discuss this with him. We will look into this.

Senator Kissel added they were looking at taking a light down by Fermi. The Route 5 light violates many rules with existing lights and intersections. They were going to waive this. We will start this discussion up again.

Mr. Regnier stated if the ECS grant funding increases, CREC increases their student tuitions. What can be done about this?

Representative Hall stated we have discussed this in appropriations. CREC is looking for funding. They are looking to receive reimbursement from the towns for transportation costs also. This conversation will also continue.

Mr. Regnier added that we have representation at the CREC meetings, and they have no objections about talking about this and doing this. How can we put a stop to this?

Representative Hall stated we would need a statute change or bill change.

Representative Arnone stated this is something we can look into next year. We cannot put in any additional bills this year.

Mr. Drezek stated a solution would be to keep Enfield students here and create better programs. He expressed his concern with the timing of the budget process. This is hurting our budgeting process. He offered a simple solution to operate our tuition bills one year in arrears and then square up at the end of the year. Potentially, there could be up to one half a million dollars of unknowns. We need a better idea of magnet tuitions for budget planning.

Senator Kissel added this is like special education costs. You have no way of knowing who might be moving into your district.

Representative Arnone stated this is something we should be doing more of.

Chairman Kruzel asked on behalf of Charlotte Riley about the ECS formula. Are you using the tweaked formula?

Representative Arnone stated yes.

Representative Hall stated the Governor put together his own formula. The formula from last year was voted out. The ECS formula is different. Our numbers are up using either formula. We are not sure what we will end up with.

Mr. Rutledge asked if we can get the formula. Representative Hall will get that for the Board.

Senator Kissel stated it is an actual formula. We called it a formula, but the past formula was not a real formula. Certain municipalities did not benefit from the past formula.

Mr. Neville thanked them for their candor. We have asked for the formula before. What do they factor into the formula?

Representative Hall stated the Governor used different criteria. He looked at the towns that paid their teachers the most, so they got less. The rationale does not make any sense. They also looked at free and reduced lunches and cities gross revenue and income. The excess money went to a lot of districts that didn't make any sense.

Representative Arnone stated the 2 formulas are very close with the results. We will get this to you.

Mr. Neville thanked them. He has full confidence that you will do the best you can for us.

Representative Arnone added we are aligning fiscal budgets and municipalities with the state budget.

Chairman Kruzel read portions from the State Constitution - article 8 about free education for elementary and secondary school students; section 2 about the state maintaining higher education. The word maintain is not free and is not provide. It is to maintain by tuition. At the Town Council meeting, you discussed free higher education tuition. That would be unconstitutional.

Representative Arnone stated Asnuntuck Community college is a gem. There are great programs also being offered in Massachusetts. There are ways to move with the system with reduced tuition costs for medical or manufacturing programs. We are hearing about shortages with nurses. He does not agree with free tuition.

Chairman Kruzel stated he does not want to see free tuition at UConn.

Representative Arnone added there are shortages in many of the medical fields. There are many doctors in the State that would love to start programs keeping medical personnel here.

Senator Kissel stated UConn wants the best and brightest to attend at their campus. His son graduated from EHS and applied to many colleges and was accepted but he did not know what to major in. He went to Asnuntuck and has an associate degree with no debt. President Lombella spoke at the graduation ceremony about students that paid their tuition while they went to school. This is something employers are looking for and will love you for it. This proves that you can juggle going to school and work at the same time and can succeed. As an attorney who did some pro-bono work, he found that some of the clients did not appreciate this. We can't afford to offer free education. This will devalue education and students will not value education as much.

Representative Hall stated that she has started a dialogue regarding higher education bills. She does not support them. It is conceptionally good concept. We are not fully funding our primary and secondary schools. We would be adding an additional burden to our state. This is a lofty goal. She likes the idea but 60% of community college students are going for free or reduced tuition. This is something we discussed today during an eight-hour forum.

Chairman Kruzel added you are only responsible to fund education for K-12 students. We were supposed to be paid 4 ½ times the cost for special education costs and get reimbursed from the state. We are only being reimbursed 73% from the state. This is against the law.

They are getting the money from the federal government.

Representative Hall stated we discussed this at higher education committee, no one had the answer about this.

Chairman Kruzel stated they are violating federal law.

Representative Hall stated the numbers are staggering. They discussed a constitutional amendment for this, but this was killed in committee.

Chairman Kruzel stated the higher education committee should also be killed. Regarding the pension contracts, when the state took over the contracts, they added binding arbitration. Now they want to give it back to us. This is in violation of the contract. The state is supposed to fund the pension fund.

Representative Hall stated one of the discussions from appropriations was to pass this back to the towns. They believe this would give them skin in the game. When they are negotiating teacher contracts, they felt this would help them to keep the costs down.

Chairman Kruzel added we are doing that now.

Chairman Kruzel asked if they could ask for a forensic audit regarding all the state colleges. Find out what we are paying these professors. Get an audit done for next year.

Representative Hall did not ask for an audit. She asked for a budget with line item detail. We also submitted a bill about this, but this was also killed in committee.

Mrs. LeBlanc also believes in community college especially if your child does not know what they want to do. Middle class families with two working parents are in trouble when it comes to financial packages. CT state schools are more expensive to attend. You will get a better financial aide package with grants from private colleges. Some states are offering residency grants. There are no guarantees when it comes to investing in CT schools with certain majors. Student debt is huge. We want students to go to school in CT and to stay and work in CT after they graduate. Connecticut is not helpful to middle class families. She believes students need some debt, so they have skin in the game and need to work for it.

Representative Arnone added that Massachusetts schools are starting to reach out to CT regarding tuition. They are pulling CT students to Westfield State. Our community colleges will allow you to transfer credits to a 4-year school for half the price.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we have a lot of partnerships with area colleges like Elms College and Holyoke Community College also offers partnership programs.

Mr. Neville stated Springfield Technical Community College also offers programs that allow you to transfer credits to Northeastern and the University of New Haven. There are many opportunities at the 2-year community college level.

Chairman Kruzel added if you lower the taxes, you will get more. He thanked our Enfield Delegation for attending the Board meeting.

The Enfield Delegation thanked the Board for what they are doing.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representatives – as presented
- b. Early Release Day, Spring Vacation & Good Friday – as presented

- c. Arts Festival, Jr. National Honor Society Induction Ceremony & Family Steam Night – as presented
- d. April 9th BOE Meeting Cancelled – as presented
- e. April Events – as presented

8. AUDIENCES

Akua Nimo, Thistle Lane – Ms. Nimo addressed concerns about her children with the Board.

John LeBlanc, Hemlock Drive - Mr. LeBlanc spoke highly about the JCJ Architect Firm for the JFK renovation project. He believes they will do a great job at JFK. He encourages you to go on line and see the work they have done in the past.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Regnier welcomed all the Board guests this evening. He thanked the students for the gifts we received and the student athletes for their accomplishments. He gave a shout out to Dr. Wiley and Mr. LaMesa for the 3-5 Math Nights they presented. They did a great job explaining the new math to parents. Parents were very receptive about this. Kudos to them. They are also looking at events to help prevent the summer slide with students. There will be good things to come from the school district.

Mr. Rutledge encouraged everyone to attend the ERfC Toast of the Town fundraiser being held on April 26th at the Old Country Deli. Tickets are still available.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked the Enfield Legislators for attending tonight’s meeting. Once a year is not enough. They are very approachable and are invested in us. They are great liaisons. She congratulated our student athletes for being great role models for our younger student. She also wished everyone a safe and happy April break.

Mr. Neville enjoys appreciation night. This is why we are here – it is for the students. He thanked the parents, students and citizens. This is the reason we do this. It is great to see the great things our athletes are doing. To hear about their academic accomplishments and having them involved in our community is fantastic. They are truly student athletes. They are role models in our community. He thanked our Enfield legislators for attending tonight’s meeting. They are a great group and they have been in our shoes. They get it and know the work we are doing here in Enfield.

Chairman Kruzal also thanked our Enfield legislation delegation for attending tonight’s meeting. He added that constitutionally the state should only be funding K-12 education. He thinks they should take the KITE video to Hartford to show them what we are doing here in Enfield.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of School Readiness Grant Application

Mr. Drezek welcomed Amy Morales to the meeting. Mrs. Morales gave an overview of the RFP for the School Readiness Grant and the Quality Enhancement Grant for 2020. The grant provides 28 slots for pre-school students. The grant requires the Town Manager and Superintendent to sign the grant. The grant application is due May 17, 2019.

Mr. Rutledge moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves the School Readiness Grant as presented and Authorizes the Superintendent to endorse it.

Discussion:

Mr. Neville asked where the money is coming from.

Mrs. Morales stated the money comes from the Office of Early Childhood from the State of Connecticut. This is open to any eligible pre-school program to apply for. There are certain qualifications you need to meet in order to be eligible to apply for this grant.

Mr. Neville asked how long is this grant for?

Mrs. Morales stated this is a 2-year grant that will start on July 1, 2019.

A vote by **roll-call 6-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Approve Remaining 4000 Series Policies – First Reading

Mr. Regnier moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education approves the remaining 4000 series for a first reading.

Discussion:

Mr. Neville asked if there are any big changes to the policies.

Mr. Regnier stated we have made some wording changes and have added state statutes and regulations to the policies. We have also added some of our forms to the policies.

Chairman Kruzel added we are aligning our policies with CABE.

A vote by **roll call 6-0-0** passed unanimously.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported the curriculum committee met on March 14, 2019. They received an update from John Dague regarding the articulation agreement with STCC. Students will need to meet certain grades for the credits to be accepted at STCC. These courses can be used towards an associate degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology. Students from Enfield will receive reciprocal tuition rates. Some of the courses completed from STCC can be transferred to CCSU towards a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology or Manufacturing Engineering Technology. The articulation agreement is for three years and the frameworks will be reviewed every three years for continued approval.

Mr. Neville reported we also reviewed some changes for the Program of Studies.

b. Finance, Budget Committee

Mr. Rutledge reported the Finance, Budget Committee met on March 25th. Mrs. West is doing a fantastic job with our finances. We will review financial reports later on the agenda.

c. Policy Committee

Mr. Regnier reported the Policy Committee has finished the 4000 series and will start reviewing the 5000 series next. We may need to postpone the April 3rd Policy Committee meeting.

d. Leadership Committee - None

e. Joint Facilities Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported the application for the second phase for Barnard's roof has been submitted to the State.

f. JFK Building Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported the JFK Building Committee held a meeting to review architects for the renovation project. The Town Council approved JCJ Architects for the design. Mr. Daigle informed him that the contract is being reviewed by legal and is very close to being signed.

Mr. Neville agrees that JCJ is a wonderful group. They did a spectacular job with their presentation. He believes they will do a great job for the Enfield community.

g. Joint Security Committee - None

h. Any Other Committees - None

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Leblanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Depeau that the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2019 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 5-0-1** passed with Mr. Rutledge abstaining.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL

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

- The month of March 2019, total expenditures amount to \$4,851,661.04, broken down between payroll totaling \$4,006,087.57 and other accounts totaling \$845,573.47. 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 6-0-0** passed unanimously.

Line Item Transfers - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

A vote by **show-of-hands 6-0-0** passed unanimously.

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

No Board action occurred while in Executive Session.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Rutledge to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 26, 2019.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary