

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 23, 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 April 23, 2019.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Walter Kruzel.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Charlotte Riley
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Charlotte Riley
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Walter Kruzel announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Regnier (arrived at 7:55 PM), Chris Rutledge, Charlotte Riley, Tina LeBlanc, Tim Neville, Scott Ryder and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Hernandez and Ashley Depeau

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

Chairman Kruzel stated that Mr. Regnier will be a little late tonight.

6. BOARD GUEST(S)

a. Administration Goal Team Presentation

Mr. Drezek stated each year our Administrative Council works on goals for the district. Last year, they worked on Wednesday night school at EHS and JFK, numerous partnerships in our community and several new professional development tools that surround our curriculum. This year, we took a different approach. They looked at the social and emotional needs of our students. With our Special Education Director Julie Carroll, they looked at two things – the supports we have in place for our students and the number of students we are currently outplacing and to look at a creative way to bring our students back home. This handpicked Goal Team brings specific talents to a project this big. They will discuss an exciting opportunity for the district.

Mr. Drezek added in order to accomplish this objective, we will be adding 2 new administrators to oversee this project – he welcomed Brian Olsen and Lauren Andrews. These two amazing talented special educational professionals will help to make sure our kids get the best education opportunities they deserve in their home town.

Mr. Drezek thanked the administrative council members for going above and beyond what is expected of them. This is something they have worked on beyond their current responsibilities. He welcomed Julie Carroll and Goal Team #5 to tonight's meeting.

Mrs. Carroll thanked the Board for this opportunity to present this program tonight. They will present an overview of the Eagle Academy, an academic and therapeutic school. We work closely when placing students outside our community. Other school districts have developed smaller academic and therapeutic schools for students within their district. This has not been

an option for Enfield students. These students are traveling early in the morning and taking long bus rides. These rides can be challenging for some of these students. We believe it is important for the students to attend school in their community so they can form friendships within their community so they can build strong relationships. We want to bring our students back to Enfield.

Mrs. Carroll introduced the Eagle Academy Goal Team members that include herself, Bridgette Birchall, Laurie Seigel, Nancy Hayes, Sandra Ingalls, Erin Clark, James Graham, Laura Gagnon, Marilyn Cressotti, Lauren Andrews and Brian Olsen. She also thanked and recognized attorney Chris Chinni for her assistance overseeing this program.

Mrs. Carroll reviewed the Goal Statement – to explore the development of a specialized learning center that will create opportunities for students to succeed through individualized instruction, intensive supports, and a network of care within the Enfield community.

Mrs. Carroll reviewed the reasons for why we are doing this. Our overall goal is to bring our students home to Enfield and provide quality programming to meet their needs. We have students with social, emotional and behavioral needs who attend special education therapeutic schools outside of Enfield. We reviewed the needs of our students and toured special education academic and therapeutic schools across Connecticut. Enfield has the resources and commitment to create an excellent special education academic and therapeutic school for our students in district. We realize that there are opportunities for the regionalization of services with other school systems in the area. We will work with Enfield students first and our goal is to bring our students home. We believe this is in the best interest of our students, families and community.

Mrs. Carroll also reviewed a graphic of how we can meet the needs of all students (least restrictive and most restrictive). Students with disabilities can receive special instruction in general education classes, resource room or a combination of both with recommendations from the Planning and Placement Teams (PPT.) Some students require a more intensive level support program in smaller group settings with recommendation from the PPT. In Enfield now, we have general education classes with opportunities for inclusion and separate specialized classes. The goal is to fill the void on this continuum when students need to be outplaced and to provide them with quality education program. Students that have medical needs, may receive homebound instruction, or have been placed in a hospital or residential setting. That would be the most restrictive placement.

Mrs. Carroll added that we are very excited about this initiative and the work we have done for our students, family and community.

Mr. Graham reviewed the social and emotional supports we have in place now, PPIS initiative and coaches in elementary schools; transition classrooms at the primary schools, tiered interventions at the middle and high schools; full-time counselors in all schools; social work services at all levels; special education and related service for identified students at all levels; and special classes at elementary, middle and high school for identified students. A small percentage of students receiving special education still need more intensive intervention and support in a small school setting.

Mr. Graham reviewed the general education classroom with IEP services: specialized instruction in areas of need in general education classroom; specialized instruction in areas of need in resource room; accommodations, modifications, behavior intervention plans; related services; co-teaching and secondary transition services.

Mr. Olsen reviewed separate classes at the elementary level – Educational Counseling Program (ECP) and at the secondary level – Successful Outcomes for Achievement and Responsibility (SOAR Program). He currently provides specialized instruction to students in an ECP small

group setting class. This is an opportunity to send our students to an academic and therapeutic school in our district.

Mr. Olsen added the Eagle Academy will help our students to develop social and emotional learning with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Mr. Olsen reviewed the Eagle Academy Key Components: specialized and collaborative education team; small school setting emphasizing relationships with all students and individualized instruction aligned with the district's curriculum standards; comprehensive services based on individual student needs and opportunities for extended school year; behavior technicians with specialized training; responsive learning environments and opportunities for participation in the Enfield community.

Ms. Andrews reviewed the small school setting for the Eagle Academy. We will offer elementary and secondary classes with flexible grouping based on students' needs; special education teachers; behavior technicians; licensed clinical social worker, BCBA and psychiatric consultative services; SLP, OT, PT and nursing services based on the students' needs and special education coordinators.

Ms. Andrews added we will offer quality educational programming in Enfield; we will focus on academics, relationships and social and emotional learning; we will have collaborative school staff; we will build strong relationships with students and families; we will offer a rich array of related and support services; we will have a state of the art facility with thoughtfully planned indoor and outdoor spaces; Enfield is ideally located for regionalization of serves near a major interstate; there will be opportunities for students to be an active part of the Enfield community and we can bring our students back home to Enfield.

Mr. Ryder would like to receive a copy of the presentation. There is need for this and we have the right people in place for this program. He thanked them for doing this.

Mr. Neville stated for decades he has seen our kids leaving our district for education and this has bothered him. He applauds them for putting your heads together and for putting this program together.

Mrs. LeBlanc would also like a copy of the presentation. She thanked them for this program. Your focus is on the wellbeing of our students and that is why we are all here. Your focus on the community is spot on. This is something she was fearful of when we redistricted the elementary schools. A sense of community is something Enfield wants for all our students - keeping all our students in Enfield. She appreciates all your work. She welcomed Lauren and Brien and thanked the entire team. We are excited for you and the students.

Mrs. Riley thanked everyone that worked on this program. You are all so talented and are very dedicated professionals. She feels this is a homerun. Bringing our kids home and educating them here in Enfield is important. We know our kids best and they will be back in Enfield. We will provide our students with the education they need. This is a phenomenal program and it will be a success. She cannot wait for this program to start. Thank you.

Mr. Rutledge congratulated them for the great job project managing this program. The information you provided is truly wonderful. One of our mottos is to try to make a difference for every child, every day. You are putting together the last piece to this puzzle. Allowing these students, the after-school opportunities and to be closer with their cohorts, friends and members in the community is important. He asked about the regionalization opportunities.

Mrs. Carroll stated once the program is up and running, we would welcome partnering with our neighboring towns. We are surrounded by smaller school districts that do not have an

academic therapeutic school for their students. They also outpace their students. We can offer them a high-quality program for their students closer to their home towns.

Chairman Kruzel stated this is a grand slam homerun program. This is phenomenal program for our students and our town. Thank you for the hard work you put into this program. Board members gave the goal team a round of applause.

Mr. Drezek is happy with what our administrators are doing for us, our students and for the Enfield community. We can not thank these individuals enough for what they have done. He thanked Mrs. Carroll and Attorney Chinni for everything. When we started out, we had a lot of unanswered questions and Mrs. Chinni has been there from the start. Thank you.

Chairman Kruzel asked each member to standup to be recognized. Board members gave them another round of applause.

Mrs. Carroll thanked the Board and the administration for their continued support.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representatives – as presented
- b. Early Release Day – as presented
- c. EHS Honors Breakfast – as presented
- d. Kindergarten Registration – as presented
- e. LEGO Event – as presented
- f. April/May Events – as presented

Mr. Drezek discussed a parent concern that was made public after a previous meeting. He read a prepared statement correcting several incorrect comments made by this parent. He also discussed staff training, equity, diversity and efforts to promote racial equity and programs we offer.

Mr. Drezek spoke about several negative social media posts Board members have shared with him. He added that if someone wants to criticize or question his decisions, that is part of the job. But when the comments become degrading and inflammatory against teachers, staff and by personal name, a line has been crossed. These comments are without fact and have reached a point of seriously disrupting the operation of the district which he will defend. This type of behavior needs to stop. He cannot control adults that behave irresponsibly. He asked Board members to stop sending these posts to him. We cannot continue to use our valuable resources to chase these posts instead of helping our students. He wants to make you aware that several investigations are currently underway, and he will not comment on these issues in public or in private.

Mr. Drezek added that the Board attorney is present and has advised him about reminding Board members that you can make comments based on your first amendment rights but given the nature of these investigations and consequences that may be forthcoming, you are advised to refrain from making any comments.

Mr. Drezek further added that it saddens him to talk about this on a night when we are discussing a monumental program that could have positive benefits for our town for decades. He apologized for his lengthy statement. He added that he will never apologize for defending the integrity of our staff and teachers.

8. AUDIENCES

Marie Pyzner, Rye Street – Mrs. Pyzner is very proud of Enfield and our school system. Her children attended school in Enfield. She is happy hearing about this presentation. It is time to

bring our students back home. She is very pleased with the goal team. She applauds the Board and superintendent for offering this program here in Enfield. This will help to put our kids ahead of the curve. She would like to know where the Eagle Academy will be located. How many students will we start with? She asked about staffing. The word will get out about this new program and these questions will be asked. We can't stop adults from behaving poorly. She is sad to see this negativity being spread down to our students. She thanked Mr. Drezek, Mr. Longey and the Board for the job you are doing.

Mr. Regnier arrived at 7:55 PM.

Maryann Turner, Meadow Road - Mrs. Turner congratulated them on this exciting new program. She always knew we had the correct people and staff in Enfield. It is exciting to see you using their talents to the fullest. Do you have enough students for this program? She is not sure where this program will be placed. What will be the capacity and space needs for this program? What will be the savings for this program, busing costs and teaching costs? This could be a good line item in the budget once you start accepting students from other towns. She is not sure what racial equity means. She is not a big Facebook person and has seen some horrible posts. Sometimes our kids act better than the parents. She would like Mr. Drezek to place his editorial on the website for people to read.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Riley thanked Mrs. Pyzner for speaking tonight. She is always very positive when she speaks before the Town Council and Board. She also thanked Mrs. Turner for comments. You both had some great questions. As we progress, we will have more answer about this new program.

Mrs. Riley thanked our student representatives for attending our Board meetings.

Mrs. Riley thanked our superintendent for his comments tonight. If you have an issue, please go to your principal and not on Facebook or twitter. If your child is having an issue and need to talk to someone, talk to the Principal first. If you still need to talk to someone after the principal, you can move up from there. Posting on social media will not help you with your concerns. It might make you feel better, but it won't help you. Come to our meetings and express your concerns about what we are doing right or wrong. Student concerns need to be done in person or by phone to protect your children and to protect our staff.

Mr. Ryder stated today at Eli Whitney we had a special celebration where Congressman Joe Courtney and several Board members recognized a student for writing and winning an essay contest. Congressman Courtney said her essay jumped off the page. The school congratulated Maggie Griffin during an assembly today for winning this PSA essay contest. He thanked the amazing staff at Eli Whitney for everything they are doing for our students. He is very proud to work with them and extremely proud of Maggie's accomplishment.

Chairman Kruzal forwarded the picture to the staff at ETV to post.

Mr. Neville thanked the Goal Team for coming up with such a positive solution. Bringing our kids back home again is great. We have great staff and they know our kids best. This is the correct thing to do for our students and community.

Mr. Neville wished Enfield High students good luck taking their AP exams. We brought these AP classes back for students to take advantage and to earn college credits. Get a good night's sleep and eat a good breakfast before taking the exams.

Mr. Neville thanked Mrs. Pyzner and Mrs. Turner for being so positive with your comments. We need to hear these kinds of comments. We have a great town. Enfield is such a great town and I truly like our town.

Mr. Neville added we have all be frustrated by statements that have been posted online. He added that Mr. Drezek's statement was well done and thank you.

Mrs. LeBlanc is very pleased with the Eagle Academy. This program will be great for Enfield and our students. This has been her 4th term on the Board. This has been her most exciting term working with this Board and administration. We have brought many great programs to Enfield. The superintendent is leading us and our district. We have great staff and principals. They are making a difference and they do this because they love it. She agreed that you should be reaching out to your principal with any concerns and not posting on social media. She knows it is hard being a parent and reaching out for help. Our staff and teachers are here for you. She appreciates the statement the superintendent made. We have a lot of caring dedicated people in Enfield. She has a huge sense of community. Please listen to what the superintendent is saying. Thank you.

Mr. Rutledge stated Enfield Foundation for Excellence (EFFE) will be recognizing our teachers during Teacher Appreciation week May 6-10. They are excepting donations to recognize our teachers for a modest donation.

Mr. Regnier apologized for arriving late to tonight's meeting. He listened to the presentation in his car and feels the Eagle Academy will be a positive program for our students and community. Bringing our students back home is the right thing to do.

Mr. Regnier thanked the superintendent for his comments. We have a great superintendent in Enfield. He has done a lot for our community. Presenting our programs to the community is a good thing to do. He added that it is not easy being a Board member. We are creating a great school system with our superintendent and administration. We need the community to work with us. We want to create a great school system. We are a team and need your support. He urged community members to refrain from making negative comments. We care a lot about our students and our staff dedicates their time for our students. We are volunteering our time to help the members of this community. In stead of making negative comments, do kind acts in our community.

Mr. Regnier thanked Superintendent Drezek and Chairman Kruzel for leading them. He thanked community members that are watching this.

Chairman Kruzel agreed that he does not want to hear about social media anymore. He is done with Facebook. If you have a problem or concern, you can e-mail him. Don't post things on social media anymore. Our teachers work hard. This needs to stop.

Chairman Kruzel wished the Buzz Robotics team is headed to Detroit for a competition. He wished them all good luck in the National Competition.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Congressman Joe Courtney for recognizing one of our students today at Eli Whitney.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

a. Approve Remaining 4000 Series Policies – Second Reading

Mr. Regnier stated after the Board approves the remaining policies in the 4000 series, they will be posted on our website.

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Rutledge that the Enfield Board of Education approves the remaining 4000 series for a second and final reading.

A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve Youth Mental Health & Wellness Advisory Council MOU

Mr. Drezek welcomed Jean Haughey to tonight's meeting. She is our Youth and Family Services Director. Mrs. Haughey will discuss the MOU. The MOU requires both the Town Council and Board of Education to approve the Youth Mental Health & Wellness Advisory Council MOU.

Mrs. Haughey thanked the Board for everything they are doing. She is extremely happy working with the school and town. We have an amazing partnership that has grown over the years. We have provided many beneficial programs for our youth. The Town Council approved this 2-year MOU on Monday, April 22nd. She thanked Mr. Neville, Mrs. Birchall and Representative Arnone for their amazing work and assistance creating this MOU.

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Regnier that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Youth mental Health & Wellness Advisory Council MOU as presented.

Discussion:

Mr. Neville thanked Mrs. Haughey for everything she has done. We owe you more than you owe us. The work you are doing for our schools and town is phenomenal. The grants you have obtained over the years benefits our kids. Thank you for everything.

A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Action if any regarding Approving Enfield Teacher Association Contract

Mr. Drezek stated Board members need to approve tentative 3-year agreement with the Enfield Teacher's Association (ETA). We have a mutual respect between the Board and ETA. He personally thanked the ETA President Emily Hulevich for working with us and everything they have done. He also thanked Tod Couture and Gray Wanzer for their assistance with this process. They made this process very seamless. Our champions for us are our teachers. The union has ratified this agreement. He thanked the members of the ETA. The Board needs to approve this and then it will need to be approved by the members of the Enfield Town Council. He thanked all the members of the ETA for everything they are doing for our students and town.

Mr. Rutledge moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Teacher Association Contract.

Discussion:

Mr. Regnier thanked the members of the ETA for making many sacrifices over the years. He thanked them for all the extras you are doing. Our teachers mean so much for this town. You are so gracious. You attend many community events and are there for our students and community. You mean so much to all of us. This contract is great, and you deserve everything that is in it. You all rock! He looks forward to voting on this contract.

Mr. Neville agreed with Mr. Regnier and thanked them. You are here in good and bad times. You are always here for our kids and you have always stepped up. This relationship doesn't just happen. You know what is best for our students and community. Thank you for everything you are doing.

Chairman Kruzel echoed the comments from Mr. Regnier and Mr. Neville. Thank you and we couldn't do this without you.

A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported the curriculum committee met on March 14, 2019. He gave an overview from the meeting regarding PK STEAM Project Lead The Way Units and Accountability Index Results.

b. Finance, Budget Committee

Mrs. Riley reported the Finance, Budget Committee met on April 15th. Our next meeting will be held on May 13th.

c. Policy Committee

Mr. Regnier reported the Policy Committee will meet on May 1st.

d. Leadership Committee - None

e. Joint Facilities Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported they are working on the master plan and the second half of Barnard's roof. We are still waiting for the State.

Mrs. Riley added we should receive our reimbursement soon from the State. Chairman Kruzel added all the paperwork has been submitted.

f. JFK Building Committee

Mr. Neville reported the JFK Building Committee met with the architects and members of the JFK building. They received their input and will bring this information back to the JFK Building Committee. They and will meet again on Thursday, April 25th.

Chairman Kruzel added they have the owners representative inline and the RFP for a contractor will go out shortly.

g. Joint Security Committee

Mr. Rutledge reported they will meet on May 1st.

h. Any Other Committees

Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Insurance Committee will meet on June 4th.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Riley moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2019 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL

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

- The month of March 2019, total expenditures amount to \$8,590,592.93, broken down between payroll totaling \$6,049,218.24 and other accounts totaling \$2,541,374.69. 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 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Line Item Transfers - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

Chairman Kruzel reported that he sent an invitation to Governor Lamont to attend a meeting.

Mr. Ryder added the PTO Presidents will meet with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent on Wednesday, April 24th. The Enfield Public Schools and Two Moms On a Mission Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 27th. It was rained out last weekend.

Chairman Kruzel added that he will attend the PTO President's Meeting.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Leblanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Riley to adjourn the Regular Meeting of April 23, 2019.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary