

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 27, 2014**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Henry Barnard Elementary School in the Board Conference Room, located at 27 Shaker Road, Enfield, CT on May 27, 2014.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM by Chairman Sirard.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Sirard
3. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Sirard announced the fire evacuation announcement.
4. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Jonaitis (arrived at 6:50 PM), Ray Peabody, Lori Unghire David Wawer, Vin Grady, Tina LeBlanc, Timothy Neville, Stacy Thurston and Tom Sirard

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Jeffrey Schumann, Superintendent; Mr. Christopher Drezek, Deputy Superintendent and Mr. John Coccia, Chief Personnel Officer

5. **Executive Session for Matters Related to Personnel including Interview Candidate(s) for Elementary Principal Position(s)**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education enters into Executive Session for Matters Related to Personnel including interview Candidate(s) for Elementary Principal Position(s).

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

Dr. Schumann, Mr. Drezek and Mr. Coccia were invited to join the Board in Executive Session.

- Candidate A joined the Board at 6:20 PM and left the Executive Session at 6:43 PM.
- Candidate B joined the Board at 6:44 PM and left the Executive Session at 6:59 PM.

Mr. Jonaitis arrived at 6:50 PM.

- Candidate C joined the Board at 7:00 PM and left the Executive Session at 7:18 PM.
- Candidate D joined the Board at 7:20 PM and left at 7:37 PM.

No Board actions occurred while the Board was in Executive Session. The Executive Session ended at 8:26 PM.

6. **Action, if any on the appointment(s) for Elementary Principal Position(s)**

Chairman Sirard stated that we are now back in open session at 8:28 PM.

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education hires Candidate A for one of the Elementary Principal positions.

A vote by **roll-call 8-0-1** passed unanimously with Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Wawer that the Enfield Board of Education hires Candidate C for one of the Elementary Principal positions.

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

Mr. Grady left the meeting at 8:30 PM

7. Approval of the Adult Education Program Improvement Project (PIP) Grants

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Adult Education Program Improvement Project Grants as presented.

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

8. Approval of the 2014 Lester J. Bodley Memorial Scholarship Recipients

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education approves Student A and Student B as the 2014 Lester J. Bodley Memorial Scholarship recipients.

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

9. Review the Proposed Changes to the Education Evaluation Plan

Dr. Schumann explained the proposed changes to the revised Education Evaluation Plan to the Board. The Department of Education will need to approve the proposed changes prior to the Board approving the plans. The Board could approve the plans before they are sent to the State if you would like. We plan to place this item on the August agenda for Board approval after we hear back from the State. Both Boards will need to approve this plan. We would like to send it to the State Department of Education first for their approval. The revised evaluation plan needs to be in place prior to the start of school in September 2014.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the revised plan is the 121 page document we received. Dr. Schumann stated that is correct.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the observations. Dr. Schumann stated if you are an effective 10-year teacher you will have 1 formal observation with 3 informal observations during the off years. You will also receive 1 post-observation at the conclusion.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the 3rd tier or if an effective teacher is still good enough. Dr. Schumann stated if you are in the effective teacher classification you are okay. If you are not in the top 2 tiers you will need a formal observation.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if most districts around us are doing something like this. Dr. Schumann stated this plan is based on the new State Guidelines.

Mr. Jonaitis stated if you are classified as effective you will need a formal evaluation. Dr. Schumann stated the State is requiring 1 formal observation and 3 informal observations in the off years. This is part of the State's flexibility plan.

Mr. Neville asked if the Board needs to vote on this plan tonight. Dr. Schumann stated no vote is needed tonight. He just wanted the Board to be aware of what is taking place.

Chairman Sirard added this is more informational so we can discuss what will transpire.

Dr. Schumann added if the Board wanted to approve the plan first and then submit it to the State Department of Education you could. He doesn't know if that would have any benefit to vote on this now or wait until we hear back from the State. The State still needs to approve our plan. The Board will need to formally approve this plan prior to September 1st.

10. Continue the 2014-15 Budget Discussion and Action, if any

Dr. Schumann distributed to Board members a document listing the Board's Priorities, Goals and our challenges: Reconcile the BOE request to the Council allocation and fully implement the Educator Evaluation System. We will need to figure out a way to close the gap in our 2014-15 budget.

Mr. Wawer moved, seconded by Mr. Peabody that the Enfield Board of Education Table Item #10 and hold a special meeting on June 3rd to work on the budget.

Mr. Neville would like the Superintendent to put together some figures for this meeting to help us with our healthy budget discussion on Tuesday.

Chairman Sirard agreed to table the budget discussion until Tuesday. It will give us more time to discuss this and having numbers available will help with our discussion.

Mr. Jonaitis stated it is important for us to sit down and discuss the budget. This needs to be settled. People's careers are depending on this discussion.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-1-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis in dissent.

11. Board Member Comments

Mr. Jonaitis shared with the Board information about the ACLU graduation lawsuit. It appears that we made the right decision not to challenge this. A very similar case to ours was turned down by the 7th circuit court.

Mr. Jonaitis addressed the Suffield Vo-Ag numbers. The cost for each student is around \$4K.

Dr. Schumann stated the cost per student is \$8,400. He reviewed this request with the Board's attorney regarding our legal obligations. If you have a standing agreement, you must follow it. Our standing agreement with the Suffield Board of Education expired many years ago. We are not under any binding agreement. The Board must maintain the average of students attending for the past 3 years in total and at grade level for incoming new offerings. The legal opinion we received is to offer 7 or 8 new seats for next year. Currently, 15 students have asked to go to Suffield Vo-Ag in 2014-15. The Board can offer a minimum of 7 sets.

Mr. Jonaitis stated every seat above 7 will cost us additional money. Dr. Schumann added every seat will cost us \$8,400 per student.

Mr. Jonaitis stated this becomes a financial issue again. He is only asking this because he has received several e-mails about this.

Mr. Neville and Mrs. LeBlanc added that they have also received e-mails about this.

Mr. Peabody attended the Prudence Crandall's One-Book-One-School event. The author of the book was present. It was a great event and he congratulated the reading program for putting this event together. They also provided lunch at their own expense and not the districts expense. The students read their persuasive essays to us. He was quite impressed with the student's essays. He congratulated Liz Patria the Elementary Reading Department Chairperson for her years of service. Well done job by everyone.

Mrs. Unghire attended the Lego Fair at Eli Whitney. She really enjoyed it. She spoke to several students about what they were doing with the Lego's and the books they read.

Mr. Wawer thanked the administrative team for everything they have done for the Board during this year's budget discussions.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated that she marched in the Memorial Day Parade. The parade was well attended and it was a lot of fun taking pictures as they walked along the parade route and photo bombing pictures taken.

Mrs. LeBlanc state that she participated in the Cold Water Challenge for the fallen fire fighter. Mrs. Thurston challenged her and she challenged Mr. Grady. Her water was much colder than Mr. Grady's water.

Mrs. LeBlanc attended the Town Council meeting on the FY2014-15 budget. We have a responsibility to be very wise when spending the tax payer's money. Council members voted against our budget because it was going against the Town charter, it was offered as an amendment and because the administration mismanages funds. She has a hard time excepting this. They should have said our budget would have been a burden on the taxpayers. When our budget passed and still could have been a tax decrease. Our kids and the families are going to be the ones that will pay for this. There are a lot of half truths out there. She is here and is available to answer any questions. She is very disappointed.

Mr. Neville agrees with Mrs. LeBlanc. We are responsible and do not mismanage our funds and takes this comment personally. We made compromises and met our fiduciary responsibilities. He was also bothered by this comment. There is a misunderstanding about the facts of the budget. Our budget was reasonable and there was a true consensus with what we presented. We all made compromises. We will continue to meet our fiduciary responsibilities and do the best jobs we can. This is a money issue. The budget gap is going to hit all of us like programs and staff.

Mr. Neville addressed the Suffield Vo-Ag parents by answering your e-mails. He understands and appreciates the reasons they have given us about the program at Suffield Vo-Ag. This is going to come down to money. We can't add money into this budget when we need to cut \$1 million dollars from our budget. We need to look at the entire budget before we can make any decisions regarding this.

Mr. Neville added that the Board has a big job ahead of them. We need to get the very best for our students. That is the reason we are here and that is why we were elected.

Mrs. Thurston agrees with what both Mr. Neville and Mrs. Thurston have said tonight. She also attended the Town council meeting. While she was sitting there, it appeared to her that education in Enfield is not a priority for some people. That was hard to swallow. The Board works very hard for the kids and teachers in Enfield. The comments that were made were inappropriate and were uncalled for. We have reached across to work with the Town council members. This is very discouraging.

Mrs. Thurston stated the Headstart students will hold their field day on Thursday. She plans

to attend. The students will also receive their moving up certificates.

Chairman Sirard also marched in the Memorial Day Parade with his sons who participate at Valarie's Martial Arts. It was a lot of fun marching with his sons.

Chairman Sirard stated there were a lot rumors, innuendos and negative talk about the budget. We worked together on the budget and presented our budget request. We have come together as a unit on the Board of Education and put our differences aside. We have worked very hard together. Any understandings about malfeasances are inappropriate. It is not factual and could be just a misunderstanding. A million dollars is hard to make up and we will continue to discuss this on June 3rd.

12. Adjournment

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. Wawer to adjourn the Special Meeting of May 27, 2014.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Vincent M. Grady
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary