

Pre-K Through 5 And Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2026
Available on YouTube

The Pre-K Through 5 and Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee held a meeting on January 7, 2026 at Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT.

1. CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Randy Daigle

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Randy Daigle, Tina LeBlanc, Christine DeBonee, Lauren Andrews, Gina Cekala, Bob Cressotti, Janet Cushman, John Dague, Kate Flanagan, Danielle Girard, Steve Moccio, Marie Pyzner, Charlotte Riley, Scott Ryder, Jaclyn Valley, Jeff Wyszynski, Antonia Ciaverella, Chris Cykley

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dean Gousse, Kelsey McGuire-Bruce, Amanda Pickett, Justin Hopkins

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Christine DeBonee to Approve Meeting Minutes of October 29, 2025

Seconded by Bob Cressotti

Motion passes by a show of hands

Motion made by Christine DeBonee to Approve Meeting Minutes of November 19, 2025

Seconded by Tina LeBlanc

Motion passes by a show of hands

Motion made by Bob Cressotti to Approve Informational Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2025 with clarification from Scott Ryder

Seconded by Christine DeBonee

Motion passes by a show of hands

4. ARCHITECTS PRESENTATION

Jeff shares on the screen the handouts. Meeting on 12/19/2026 was held with Enfield Public Schools. An 11X17 is a graphic representation of the program spaces. We use this as the starting point, these are considered a draft. The reason this is important is when you start moving toward the grant application if you are above the allowable area which this represents that we are, which is about 18%-19% over, this is something that we want to talk about with the timeline and for special legislation.

Randy states when this does pass and the architect is designing each of the buildings, these will get looked at again. Don't feel like this is one and done. This is to get the footprint out to the public and to get the cost. It will get modified and looked at again.

Jeff states this will be the basis for the ed spec. for the grant application that we need to submit by June. The ed spec needs to be approved by the board of education. We want to spend time on the schedule now that we are narrowing in on the preferred option. What is the next steps in related to the grant applications. We want to think about when is the referendum. Schedule is reviewed. We'd love to hear feedback on community conversation number 2. There was 40-50 in attendance. We prepared a basic survey we can distribute to community now before community conversation number 3. A question had come up previously about roofs that received grants. We went through and did a calculation, when that reimbursement took place, the State requires a 10 year amortization. Barnard will be out of that window. Screen is shared with school names, trigger dates. Hazardville Memorial is

about half way through amortization. You could ask for forgiveness or pay a penalty. It would be about half-million dollars. I will share this to appropriate channels. Proposed milestone schedule shown, there are 4 more meetings. Questions that came up were about finding access to forums. Everything on the website has been updated. There was a question about operable windows.

Randy states after Sandy Hook, the State put a commission together and it's not advised, safety has to come first.

Jeff states other questions were about district zones? That would be part of the work to balance all the demographics.

Randy asks did I hear you correctly about should we put the survey out first? What would the survey be that they already had information on?

Antonia states at community conversation number 2 we shared building options, other options explored and why, then they could share how they feel about preferred options. We could ask if they are a parent, student, resident. How clear was the presentation? They could share additional comments.

Randy states trying to get feedback on which preferred option, we've decided to go in one direction. It's irrelevant, we have a direction we're going in. We are doing costs associated with the construction, bonds, taxes. I wonder what the benefit would be then?

Charlotte states I'd like to see what they wanted in the schools.

Danielle states she likes that you're asking for additional feedback. How we got here? It seems like people are really paying attention to it.

Randy states this committee or the Town cannot spend money, the PAC will do that. They will request donations.

Charlotte asks if the Town can put out information?

Scott state the Town can do that, but it has to be factual. Once you've established that it is a question that is going on the ballot any elected official cannot speak to it on a microphone.

Randy states how do we determine what is the best date? I'm hearing November but then I'm hearing there is a lot going on in November, this may not be the only question on the ballot. Do we do it before November? We need to have this conversation.

Scott states I need to know what else is going on the ballot before I give you my opinion. In general, I would like it to be the 2nd Tuesday of November, that's when people go to vote.

Randy states who do we talk to about that? Gina, do you have that information?

Gina states I think we have to give the Town Manager's office direction. For example, Roads 2026 is that going on the ballot, or are we going to push it to 2027?

Danielle asks do we know how much it is going to cost the town to do a special election?

Gina states that is a Registrar of Voters question.

Jaclyn states if we do June, it has to be before school gets out or we lose half the town.

Jeff states it sounds like we will table the survey for now. The next component to our discussion was about the schedule. Whenever the referendum date is it needs to be before November 15th. For our June 30th grant

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application, if it's going to be after the deadline of June 30th, we need the date and the authorization. It doesn't need to be in the next couple of months, if it's going to be after the grant application we need the date so we can include it in the grant application. The other piece we need to get into is the work related to the grant application. The preferred option contains 5 grant applications. Each school is its own grant application plus Eagle Academy. Each would have to have its own educational spec., estimate and so on. Part of the grant application is the size of the building, the program and the ed spec. It would be preferable to have the special legislation related to the allowable area. There is a paragraph that comes from the State and we can help with that. Over the next couple of months, we are going to fine tune the program. There are a series of activities such as land due diligence, ed specs, conceptual design options, all of that should take place in late February, March. In order to get on the agenda for the board of education for ed spec approval we would target April 28th or May 12th so that we can submit it prior. I need the vote and the approval of the minutes. You tell us if that is going to be a 2 or 3 meeting process. The board of education is the body that needs to approve the ed spec. We would need authorization from the superintendent to submit the grant, the establishment of the building committee, then authorization to enter plans and specifications for schematic design. There is no cost associated with this. The referendum date vote can happen later if you need time to decide. If you're going to have the referendum in November or sometime after June 30th we need the identification of that date and the minutes approving that date. As we get closer we will dial into the dates.

Gina states we are going to know when the referendum is going to be in the next month or two.

Chris states yes, if you're going to have it in June, you need to back up. We need to upload all of this information to the State.

Tina states pushing off the referendum until November allows for opportunities to give more information out. The 4th of July is so well attended, the end of year school events are very well attended. I see a lot of opportunities to get the word out and more time to fundraise. Those are my thoughts.

Randy states if we could find out what else is going to be on there. Is late August better? It could be the only question. We are going to have to figure this out and have more discussion.

Gina states there may be some State things on there and we can't control that.

Marie states September might be a better choice. If the kids are back in school, then people are in that mindset.

Jeff states if we can help with any piece of that, let us know. We need all the dates, the referendum date before June 30th. I see a lot of activities happening in March, April and May to prepare for solid grant applications. The other piece that is significant is the preferred options schedule, as shown in slide Planning Options. The green bar is the design phase. This shows design phase and construction phase. The light green on the slide is where the dollars actually hit. When you start looking at from a tax impact we are going to help with cash flow for approval for design phase and for construction. When we stagger this, we try to level out the cash flow. This was a graphic way to depict what is going to happen in the next steps of this project.

Randy states based on the green bar, the bonds start in 2028, we're asking for \$58 million. After 2030 that's when the next phase of construction is going to come in of \$33 million of tax after reimbursement. We need to educate the public that it is not \$200 million we are looking for it's only \$53 million starting in 2028 and after that we will only need \$30 million. The three schools are going to be \$58 million, once we start paying they reimburse. At no point will we be responsible for \$58 million. It will always be a draw, that will get us to 2030 and we have the 2nd phase which is the last 2 schools at \$23 million. We are not asking for \$58 million dollars. Every bill we get we will be reimbursed.

Jeff states when you're getting into the bigger dollars, you're submitting to the State on a monthly basis or every other month. You want to lock in your reimbursement rate so you know you have predictability. This is what we are going to use for that conversation.

Randy states we are locking in 85% reimbursement.

Marie states I think it is very important to let the residents know that the grants are locked in. People need to understand that. If you're not involved in it like the average person, people need to know this is locked in. The Junior High and High School were one shot. It needs to be very clear and precise in that once these grants are locked in the money from the State will be locked in. We have to be as clear as we possibly can. The majority of the people I talk to want this project to happen. You're getting 4 schools in what we paid for one. I think it's important to break it down as to what it is going to be per household.

Randy states the additional 15% for the pre-K will not be around in another year or so, that's why we need to lock it in. That's why we have to go for all 5 schools.

Christine states people think it is going to affect our tax bills now. Educate them on how the bonds work.

Chris states at JFK we were able to convey it was about \$100.00 a year per \$200,000 home.

Kate states we need to be super sensitive to the community, are we definitely getting the money, is it guaranteed. We have to be sensitive to their questions. We need to think, listen and hear. Put the survey out and let them know they're being heard.

Tina states maybe a brief, simple explanation of the bond process. Saying it is locked in and guaranteed.

Randy stated we go through the floor plan, the occupancy, everyone knows exactly what we have. We need to uniformly say the same thing, the facts, to the public.

Jeff states by June 30th you submit the grant application. December 15th the priority list comes out, it's a list of everyone who has submitted grant applications. It will identify every project they are promoting and submitting to the legislature for approval. If you submitted in June of 2026, December of 2026 you will get the list, then sometime in April or May they will approve the list. You will get a grant commitment letter for your grant applications. The letter is your guarantee that the State will commit to your project. On the priority list there are A projects, B projects and C projects. I have seen all A, B and C projects be funded. This years priority list is about \$300 hundred million plus. In years past it has been up in the 700-800 million.

Charlotte asks will we have any indication before our referendum if they accept it?

Jeff states no.

Randy states not till the Appropriations Commission makes a recommendation to put it on the agenda.

Jeff states that is why I am strongly recommending the Special Legislation for the size of the building. That gives you surety the reimbursement rate is on the entire building.

Danielle states we need to be clear with our State Legislators we need that help to get this moved forward.

Randy states I've already had that conversation with them.

Charlotte asks does the House and the Senate have to approve it?

Chris states it becomes a Bill so it is both. The school construction list will become a public act.

Jeff states key dates we have 5 meetings on the calendar left. Community Conversation is February 4th.

Marie asks do we have a inclement weather date, trying to be pro-active.

Jeff states he will be in contact with the district.

Jeff continues the next piece is having the meeting with finance. If you are listening online you can submit questions to preref@enfieldschools.org.

Charlotte asks about the space waiver, do you need the board of ed to approve or you just submit?

Jeff states there is a space waiver approval process that you can do after the grant submission. We need to lock in on the size of the building, the language should be we need these 4 buildings at this square footage to relieve the allowable area. We need the Eagle Academy Therapeutic Program because of the functions within it. That language would resolve the space waiver.

Randy asks by bringing this to their attention earlier does it give us a better chance of the Appropriations of putting us on the agenda?

Jeff states it is a more predictable way to ensure your community that you're going to get reimbursement. If someone was to ask why, you have good data to explain.

Chris states it locks in the reimbursement.

Randy states we will be meeting with John Wilcox.

Tina states with the community conversation, will we have number of what it will be if we do nothing? I think we need a graphic for that community conversation.

Randy states yes.

Marie states we need to give them as much information as possible. Also, hearing people stating they thought population was going down. They need to see the all work put in it. We have to market this so the public sees the benefit.

Randy states we need to collectively think about a referendum date. We need to talk to Matt about what else may be on the ballot.

Marie states we are looking at a \$40 million Road Project for 2026. Other than that, I think the Roads Project is the only one. Whether you have this in June or September, people know about the Roads Project.

Randy states next scheduled meeting is February 28, 2026.

*Revision: Next meeting date was January 28, 2026, as scheduled.**

5. COMMENTS

- a. Committee Member Comments
- b. Liaison Member Comments
- c. Good to the Order

6. Motion to Adjourn
Motion to Adjourn made by Charlotte Riley
Seconded by Tina LeBlanc
Motion passes by a show of hands

Adjourned at 7:34 PM

Submitted by Ellen Smith