

Pre-K Through 5 And Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
April 29, 2026
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The Pre-K Through 5 and Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee held a special meeting on April 29, 2026 at Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Christine DeBonee

2. **ROLL CALL**
 MEMBERS PRESENT
 Christine DeBonee, Lauren Andrews, Janet Cushman, John Dague, Kate Flanagan, Danielle, Girard, Dean Gousse (6:24), Steven Moccio, Charlotte Riley, Jaclyn Valley, Jeff Wyszynski, Antonia Ciaverella

 MEMBERS ABSENT
 Randy Daigle, Tina LeBlanc, Gina Cekala, Bob Cressotti, Kelsey McGuire-Bruce, Amanda Pickett, Marie Pyzner, Scott Ryder, Justin Hopkins, Christoher Cykley

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 Motion made by Charlotte Riley to Approve Meeting Minutes of April 8, 2026
 Seconded by Kate Flanagan
 Motion passes by a show of hands

4. **ARCITECT PRESENTATION**
 Jeff states there has been a lot of activity that has been ongoing relative to the grant application. Majority of the items I am going to review are all grant checklist items. First one, which is phase 1 environmental engineering. A few meetings ago you approved Eagle Environmental to conduct phase 1 environmental assessments of all 5 sites. That is part of form 053 which is part of the state grant application. They have walked the sites, collected data, completed the questionnaires with Enfield Public Schools and are in the process of finalizing those reports. I expect to have them in the next week or so. Once we have them we will review them for any kind of findings. In some instances they may recommend a phase 2 which is more environmental testing, more specific areas to the site. That can be handled when this project is approved to move forward. Jeff shows the form 053 and states we will complete these forms for each site so all 5 applications will have this. We are working with John Dague and the public schools to work through all the technical components and information assigned in these forms. That will be our work for the next few weeks. As far as phase 1 environmental, we are in a great spot expecting to get those reports shortly. The Ed Specs we went through the process of developing, submitting drafts, receiving comments, revising all of the educational specifications for all 5 projects, and had a board meeting on April 8th where we gave a brief presentation and answered questions related to the projects. They were approved.

Danielle states we had a meeting last night and approved the minutes.

Jeff continues once those are published and signed off, we will use those approved meeting minutes as part of the grant application, along with the educational specifications. Unifomat estimates, we have been presenting to the community over the last several months on the planning options part of the grant application is validating those budgets via unifomat estimates. It is a much more detailed estimate. Gilbane was part of our team early on validating some of the budgets. We took an in depth look at each of the projects. They developed their own independent cost estimates which is required by the state. We have validated everything. The budgets as presented have been validated. The numbers won't change from what was presented at all the various different board meetings. We've developed the detailed soft cost list. There will be line items for items such as furniture, fixture, technology that are going to be part of the project. That all rolls up into this estimate. We will work with Chris Cykley, Gilbane, Tecton to get that populated in the unifomat estimate, then it needs to be uploaded to

BizNet, which is a portal that the state tracks all the costs related to projects. We then give it to John and the Superintendent to post on the electronic grant application.

Danielle asks that is the total cost, not reimbursement wise, correct?

Jeff states that is the total project cost without reimbursement.

Danielle asks do we have a set number currently for what our reimbursement is?

Jeff states we've been consistent with what our projection is, as far as the base reimbursement, which is a published fixed rate. Then you have multipliers, incentives the 15% for early childhood and the 15% for specialized education. The town representatives are currently active in the special legislation which would give basically the projects a space waiver, a waiver allowing all of the area for the projects to be reimbursed. The session ends on the 6th, so we will know that in fairly short order and with confidence. This is the very reason why we were asking and promoting to get this into this sessions special legislation is so that come fall for the referendum, exactly what you're basing your reimbursement on. If everything goes as planned as the drafts have indicated, the reimbursement rate that we've been presenting is going to be generally what you'll see for the projects. It was the base rate around 70, then you add the 15%. I think we've been carrying around between 80%-82%. There are going to be some ineligible costs. Such as if you need to go outside the property line, like if you need to run a water line connection to the street to the other side of the street, or run part of the sidewalk down the road just to connect. Anything outside the property line is ineligible for reimbursement. That is one example. Our goal is to have 90% of all the checklist items completed, maps, 053, all the forms, and an update to the reimbursement.

Danielle states once that number is locked in besides those ineligible items, it is locked in.

Jeff states yes. There's a published base rate for 2026 grant applications. That without a doubt is your base rate going in if you submit your grant application before June 30th, and it's accepted, that is going to lock in your base rate. So if they change the rates up or down next year, that's for next years grant applications. What has changed this years table is the delta between renovate as new or new. They used to be 10% across the board, each community is a little different now. For Enfield those numbers are much closer together. Staying on estimates, once we do all that work we need to create a PDF and we'll send that to John for posting in the electronic grant. The other big component is the town council approvals. We were at a meeting on the 20th where all the necessary resolutions were read and approved. The action out of this is everything's been approved, we just need the certified meeting minutes from that meeting. By our next meeting we will have all the data collected and prepared. On the referendum, it was the committee's decision to go to the election day, November 3rd. The cost impact heard anecdotally that there might be some updates, so we're going to track that down through the chair. The last update we received from town finance was the one that was shared with us where we talked about the impact and what it means to each person in the community. Our recommendation is to take, once we understand where we land with the percentage reimbursement, we should refresh those numbers to make sure everyone is on the same page, from town finance to town council so we're all working off the same sheet. On the grant application and electronic portal, we had a meeting with John earlier today, all 5 are started. Thank you John. They're open on the electronic portal. We're going to set up regular meetings, we will meet likely, on a weekly basis remotely to track the progress. At our next meeting we will give a summary of the overall program, meaning the building program, one pager so that somebody reading it from a grant side can understand overall goal and then give a summary document of what each project is like, schedule, cost, scope, timing just so people who don't know about the project can read one page and understand the contents. That will be helpful for Scott, as well.

Charlotte states the narrative you were just talking about that's going to go with the application, or is that for us and general public, or both?

Jeff states both. There are areas in the grant application where you can attach additional materials. We typically will attach our summary presentations, a narrative. The Eagle Academy at Eli Whitney, the one difference is that it

is a renovate as new. There is a designation checklist that our team will work on with the district. It's basically a signed and sealed letter that the building can be reused as a renovate as new. It is a little different than the new construction applications, but it's a necessary step to make sure you get the renovation status. The renovation status mean that you comprehensively renovate this building, kind of reinvent it and that our RNV status means that all of the systems our reimbursable. With special legislation Chris Cykley has been working with the town, with us and representatives to get the drafts in. I think Scott Ryder has been ready, willing, able and preparing for the next step in the communication. If there are more community meetings that need to happen, we are here. If there are materials that are needed we can certainly help. Antonio has already shared some drafts. Overall, we hit our schedules, we're making good progress on the grants and all the asks of all the different committees.

Steve states it is house bill 5150.

Jeff states we will track that, it usually gets in there last minute.

Danielle states my biggest concern right now is getting this information, the proper and accurate information out to our residents. Honestly, it is kind of hard for people to navigate the website when it comes to our district. I think we need very clear and detailed information given, and that's not happening right now. There is a lot of misinformation that is going out. I'm doing my best to stay as factual as possible. I always tell people to send an email if you have questions. As people are doing what they're doing and posting and asking questions if people give wrong information that's what gets sent out to people. We need to utilize this and make that part a little bit faster.

Jeff states we have a good FAQ from the previous community conversations. Once these things become clear we can put more definition to those statements. I think a FAQ and a fact sheet is needed to simply summarize. Once this gets refined and clear which we will know in the next week, we can update everything.

Charlotte states when everything is locked in, my opinion is to go back to the council and have a presentation. While we have the presentation I know ETV is highly technologically advanced, the can put the website on the bottom. If we can get lucky they can put a QR code down there. We need to go back one more time when everything is sold and give them the whole rundown.

Christine asks if we can schedule another community conversation, I thought that was a really good idea and a good way. I think if we can get more information out there more people will come to the community conversation. There are still a lot of people out there who have no idea this is happening.

Jeff states I think it'll help with clarity to some of the questions once we have it more defined.

Dean states my fear is that a lot of those comments are not exaggerations, but we still need to do this. Although people say and this is not a comment towards you, but a comment for Randy's information, there has to be a plan B. Whether we want it to happen or not, there is an actual possibility that this will not be voted in. We do need a plan B and we need the real and factual numbers because I do believe that this is less expensive than plan B. We need those real numbers so that people can compare so people can say this is going to cost us this much this year, this amount of time. We can't band-aid these buildings anymore. They really need to be fixed and that will be more expensive because that will all be on our shoulders. We really do need to have those numbers available for people to see. I believe it's important that we do this, but we have to put that all out there for people to really make a decision.

Charlotte states we have those numbers because when we tried to get the pre-ref going again, me and Steve sat there and gave them how much it was going to be, so we could just update those.

Dean states that would be so perfect. That's my whole point.

Steve states those number have been given numerous times. Jeff and Antonia have provided those numbers. One of the slides, the one of the bucket fills. Those are the numbers, that is your plan B.

Dean states he understands that but I'm here in all of these.

Steve states plan B is you get no reimbursement. It comes out of pocket. You have no advancement for the kids regarding space, regarding programming. I need you to convince your constituents, They're the ones begging for plan B. We've been dealing with this for six months. Enfield has done this to itself. The buildings are going to fall down, then you're really going to be in a pickle.

Dean states I understand that. You don't have to convince me. I know as a committee we need to convince the town.

Charlotte state we don't want it to be boilers on trailers, again. That was disaster.

Christine states it doesn't need to be sugar coated. Sometimes things get sugar coated and somebody's going to come up with a plan B, there's no plan B.

Charlotte states if you vote no, the problem doesn't go away.

Lauren asks about the PAC, it's getting the word out. It's not using a website because no one goes to websites, they go to social media, they go to events. When can the PAC, I know we needed a date, what else do we need for the PAC to be able to start?

Charlotte states when town council bonds it for referendum is when the PAC can start.

Lauren asks how far away is that?

Charlotte states it should be relatively soon because as soon as the grant application gets sent in, it should happen.

Jeff states the resolutions spoke to the referendum, the project being put on the referendum. We should look into this.

Christine states we will find out and start moving forward.

Lauren states maybe you could touch base with Randy and he could send an email to the committee with an update so we don't wait until the next meeting.

Danielle states I am always trying to be factual.

Christine states our next meeting is May 20, 2026.

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 Kate Flanagan
Motion passes by a show of hands

Adjourned at 6:38 PM

Submitted by Ellen Smith