

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on December 12, 2023.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairwoman Riley.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Dr. Gerald Calnen
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Dr. Gerald Calnen
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jean Acree, Dr. Gerald Calnen, Janet Cushman, Peter Jonaitis, Philip Kober, Tina LeBlanc, Amanda Pickett, and Scott Ryder

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent; Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent; Student Representatives Kayla Surprenant and Alicia Lizzotte

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. First Lego League Students

Mr. Drezek welcomed our STEAM Coordinator Elana Beebe and students to the meeting.

Mrs. Beebe thanked Mr. Drezek and Chairwoman Riley for the invitation. Advisors Mr. Barrett, Ms. Ziba and Ms. Muggleton are here as well as students Kayvon, Sophia and June. We held our first LEGO League showcase at JFK on December 2nd. She showed a video of what they did. There are 36 students who are part of the club. She provided the Board an overview of the program. FIRST will give them a theme and this year it was the "Arts." There are 15 missions their robots must complete. The students demonstrated how the robots work to complete their missions.

Mr. Ryder asked about the mapping program they are using on their iPads? Mr. Barrett stated the coding they use is all block coding. Mrs. Beebe added students start with block coding in Kindergarten with our STEAM education.

Mrs. Pickett thanked them for coming. This club starts and grade 5 and goes up to the high school. The thanked the students for their hard work.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked the students if they played with Legos before becoming a part of this club. Some of the students indicated that they did play with Lego's.

Mrs. Beebe added when the students first start coming to Lego League they think they will play with Lego's, but they don't.

Mrs. LeBlanc added when you moved your robot's around to complete their missions you were all very confident and poised. She appreciates them coming here tonight and showing us your demonstration. She does not understand coding. You are above where she was in grade 5.

Thank you for coming.

Chairwoman Riley asked how long does it take to program the robot? The students responded that it only takes a couple of minutes.

Mrs. Beebe added they started this in September until now and met two times a week. At the showcase they were given 4 minutes, and they were all making changes to the program.

Mrs. Acree asked how the students are chosen for this? Is it an open club for anyone that might be interested? Mrs. Beebe stated the advisor will put out a flyer with permission slips about the club to the grade 5 students. Last year we included grade 4 students.

Mrs. Cushman asked if any of the students have attended any Buzz Robotics competitions? They are very exciting to see. The students said they haven't. Mrs. Cushman asked if they will continue with this club when they go to JFK next year and at the high school? The students said they would. Mrs. Cushman added this is a great foundation and appreciate you being here tonight.

Mrs. Pickett supports this program completely.

Chairwoman Riley thanked them for being here tonight with you awesome Lego's and showing us how the robots work. You did an excellent job, and she cannot wait to see what you do with Buzz Robotics.

b. Accountability Update

Mr. Drezek stated we briefly started to review this item at our last meeting. He welcomed our Chief Academic Officer Ms. Middleton, EHS Principal Ms. Clark and our Counseling Coordinators Mr. White.

Ms. Middleton stated we will discuss the accountability index indicator #4 and information on the vision of a graduate. She reviewed the definition of the indicator, absences and chronic absenteeism. Excused and unexcused absences count towards the total absences. Attendance letters will be sent out based on the number of absences to make parents aware of lost instruction time.

Mr. Drezek added letters will start to be sent out to parents because students are not in school. He has received these letters for his own children. The law requires us to send these letters out. We need to remember what occurred in the past along with the requirements for quarantining. The state determined what the rules would be along with the department of public health for this. Students would be sent home for a minimum of 5 days. Those 5 days were included in the letter that was sent home to parents. The state only cares if you are in school or out of school. Those letters will be going out. This does not mean you are a bad parent. The law requires us to do this.

Ms. Middleton added at the end of last year we rewrote the parent letters. The language in the letters are different at each level. There is a difference with 5 absences in November and 5 absences in May. Our schools will work with families. The letters will start the communication process with parents about the instruction children are missing and to put supports and interventions in place.

Ms. Middleton reviewed the indicator score for each indicator for the percentage of students that are chronically absent for all students, and for students with high needs.

Mr. White reviewed the different interventions that are in place for students in grades K-12 (attendance team meetings; contact/outreach; agency referrals; attendance letters; team meetings; attendance letters; SAT's, 504's PPT family meetings; and home visits.).

Ms. Clark reviewed the impact of the weight of credit and graduation requirements. She also communication letters and warning loss of credit letters.

Ms. Middleton stated our Alliance Plan included using our SRO's to conduct regular home visits, make family connections and connect families with resources. This is something we hope to put into place.

Mr. Drezek stated the plan that were are required to have in place as an Alliance District is based upon the grant. The state wants to know how you will spend the money. The plan needs to align with the accountability index. We have had 2 versions of the plan ready if we were to have received funding, but that did not happen. Addressing this indicator is important if our kids cannot perform because they are not in school.

Mr. Drezek added many of the newer Board members have indicated that they are eager to get started. We have outlined the districts responsibility, and the administrations responsibility is. Board members have a platform when it comes to reassuring families to get their kids to school. This would be extremely helpful. We need them to come to school. Clarifying for the public that every absence counts, loss of instruction counts, and this will count against us when we are getting scored on things. This is something we are all in together. This is an area that needs to be improved on. They have discussed some of the interventions that we have in place. He would like more but we didn't receive any funding. We will still use our staff to help get our kids into school every day.

Ms. Clark reviewed the vision of the graduate and made sure our programming meets the needs of our students. The vision of a graduate is a shared understanding of our community and what we believe our students should improve, develop and which skills they should improve and develop as a result of their time in Enfield public schools. This is also required by the NEAS&C accreditation process.

Ms. Middleton stated our work is to align our students from PK-12. We need to expose them to these skills from early on so they can grow and develop their skills. It is our intent that our students will graduate with the required skills. This will affect our PK-12 instruction.

Mr. White stated our belief for the vision of a graduate process it is important to keep this in mind with each step. Our students need to feel welcomed and valued every day.

Ms. Clark reviewed the product and how communicating matters. This should serve as a guiding light of the work we are doing. We have learning expectations and were able to design assessment tools, rubrics and learning tasks that will assess students learning.

Ms. Middleton reviewed the process of identifying the skills the graduates will know and can do that will help them to thrive in their lives. We started this process with our teachers at professional learning instructions during August. Identifying the skills is the first step and then defining them. This is the first stage of the process. The second stage of the process is implementation where we will look at our curriculum and instruction. We need to make sure there are places where these skills can be taught and assessed, practiced by the students. This will lead us to when they graduate and leave high school.

Mr. White reviewed the steps of the graduate work. We have started the work. Our next steps with stakeholders is to identify our primary skills. This is a multi-year endeavor. Once we have identified the integral skills our next steps will be to work on incorporating and aligning our curriculum and assessments. This way the work that is done at each level of overreaching goals will be improved upon each year.

Chairwoman Riley stated that was really exciting. Thank you for your presentation.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked them for the presentation. This makes her think of the PK-5 modernization plan and how this would come into play. Curriculum is important conversation to have with staff and parents. Our Alliance Plan was very frustrating. State laws do not always mold to a specific district and what students need. At the high school level, two tardies equal one absence.

Ms. Middleton added there is a misconception with excused absences not counting. That is not true.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated you need to look at the number of absences a student has for a full-year or half-year class. The vision of what a graduate is and having less transitions will be helpful. She appreciates the in-depth presentation. We want to see this succeed also.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about absences and if injuries and illnesses count the same. Ms. Middleton stated that any reason for an absence counts. You need to be there in school. You need to be in school participating for at least half of the day. The 2 tardies equals 1 absence is at the high school level only.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the tardies equally an absence and if this is a state mandate or a town policy. Ms. Clark stated that is a town rule. If they are meeting with a teacher it won't count.

Mr. Jonaitis asked how many students are at the high school and how many students participate in vocational ed classes. Ms. Clark stated 1,500 students are at EHS. Mr. Dague stated approximately 900 kids participate in career and technical education classes throughout the year. Some of our students are graduating with 2 or more CTU credits.

Mrs. LeBlanc added our block scheduling allowed for this. We have numerous course offerings for this now.

Mr. Jonaitis asked how long are the blocks. Ms. Clark stated it varies on the day, but they can run from 78-85 minutes. Eagle Block days are shorter and are around 65-72 minutes. We have an A and B day schedule for the students with 4 periods per day.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about History, Science, English and Math, do they get the same amount of time. Ms. Middleton said yes, and it depends on the day. There are no study halls at the high school anymore.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the high school is nothing like the middle school where they get 42 minutes of instruction per class. Both Ms. Middleton and Ms. Clark stated it is very different.

Mrs. Pickett is very excited about this. She will follow up with an email. Almost a quarter of our most vulnerable students are missing valuable instruction. Do we know what the root causes are? Are there certain grade bands that show trends? I know from our Curriculum meetings, we are trying to keep the students engaged so they won't miss classes. How will our interventions help? Discipline also impacts attendance. Hearing that 2 tardies equals an absence worries her. Who determines what is an excused absence? All of this affects students credits and the required credits to graduate. We all want to see our students graduate and move on with their lives.

Mrs. Pickett would like to see us continue advocating with the State for our grants and funding for our schools.

Mrs. Pickett also likes the vision for a graduate, and this is very exciting. KITE has some reports that might be helpful with this. Core values are posted at the school in the café. In the

SEL presentation last year and all of the good work we are doing teaching our students skills. Can we use some of the things that are working and use that feedback to help?

Ms. Clark does not think we need to reassess our community values and needs means we need to scrap everything we are doing. We are doing some really great work. We need to revisit what is important in our community. This might shape and create some new experiences for our kids.

Mrs. Pickett is excited to hear more about this work. Thank you for this important work that is being done. Hopefully, we can work through policies and curriculum to support the needs.

Mr. Kober thanked them for being here. Mrs. Pickett had some great points she discussed regarding the data and trends. When you are discussing excused and unexcused absences, what number are you looking at for these chronic absenteeism?

Ms. Clark stated the majority are excused at the high school level. Mr. White agrees the majority are excused absences because of communication with the parents.

Mr. Kober added this is important to know. You spoke about absenteeism teams and focus groups, are there any trends with the same students that are chronically absent year by year. Have you seen any changes?

Ms. Middleton stated she does not have that information but will look into it. There are some trends with some of the same students. Mr. Kober added this would be important information to know. Ms. Middleton stated she is sure there are some trends as you mentioned. She will follow up on this.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the 2 tardies that equal an absence in April and May with seniors and they are late, the schools will call you and you will receive a letter about absences. You can see this on PowerSchool also. Accountability is important.

Ms. Clark added instruction time is extremely important and during the first few minutes, the teacher is really engaging the students to get their brains activated. This helps them to learn better.

Mr. Jonaitis stated you are trying to get our students ready to leave school, what are we doing with the students that are struggling with reading and writing and are below grade level?

Ms. Middleton stated there is a difference with content and the vision of a graduate. The vision of a graduate is overarching skills. We have academic interventions in place for students that are struggling at every level. This will be discussed further when she comes back to discuss the academic piece of the accountability index. The skills we are talking about are problem solving, digital citizenship, creativity, and collaborating. Something where they can use that skill in all content areas. These are some of the things businesses want students to graduate knowing. Interventions are in place for students struggling with math and reading at all grade levels.

Mr. Drezek added we plan to continue with these indicators at each Board meeting. We will bring staff members to address this. We will review all 12 indicators. This is a good starting point.

Chairwoman Riley asked where are we compared to the state average and other Alliance districts with this indicator? Ms. Middleton can get this information.

Mrs. Pickett stated that information can be found on the Stated Edsight website.

Ms. Middleton added when Mr. Drezek showed graphs at the last meeting he had the State numbers up. We are not that much different from the State numbers. Mr. Drezek stated we outpaced the State with this particular indicator.

Chairwoman Riley remembers when she was previously on the Board we marketed for Day 1 – be there. She believes that might have been successful and maybe we should do that again. Regarding agency referrals and home visits, she assumes it is based on what the teacher notices and absenteeism. Who makes that decision? Mr. White stated that comes from the many conversations we are having with the parents. The parents might express some of their needs and we will match them with the appropriate agency.

Chairwoman Riley asked if the high school students get the opportunity to makeup credits they may have lost? Ms. Clark stated we offer credit recovery for students that qualify. We will prioritize seniors that are in danger of not graduating. This has been very successful and gives students hope.

Chairwoman Riley asked when this is done? Ms. Clark stated it is currently happening during the school day in our credit recovery center for half year and full year courses to catch students up to their class level.

Chairwoman Riley likes that you have included all stakeholders in this. This was something we heard when we were knocking on doors, that our residents want our students to be prepared for what awaits them when they graduate. Business owners mentioned the things they would like graduates to be able to do. She thanked them for this outstanding presentation. It is very educational and important to get out to the community.

Ms. Middleton addressed the kindergarten entrance issue and the waiver. We are aware of this and are looking at an assessment to prove the students are ready to start kindergarten. This plan will be in place for May 1st. Students will be assessed after school ends. We are working on this and are aware. She will also look at what other districts will be doing. We are looking at different options.

Mr. Jonaitis asked what is the age cut off? Ms. Middleton stated it used to be January 1st and the State just changed it to September 1st. If you have a child whose birthday falls from September 2nd to December 31st you can apply for a waiver for them to attend Kindergarten. We need to have an assessment that we will give to all students with equal measures and equal benchmarks they will need to obtain to be accepted into Kindergarten. This is coming from the State. This goes into effect for the 2024-25 school year.

Mr. Drezek added there is no state-wide assessment to be given.

Chairwoman Riley added the state did not give us something to use. We will need to make the assessment up. Ms. Middleton added neither the State nor the Legislators gave us the assessment to use. Mr. Drezek added none will be coming.

Ms. Middleton added if any parents ask you about this, we are working on the assessments.

Mr. Kober asked if this is something that should be placed on the policy committee agenda. Our policy still lists January 1st.

Mr. Drezek added that will need to go before the Policy Committee. This is a State change that will affect our policies that we will need to change.

Ms. Middleton added when we decide on the assessment, we will bring this up at a Curriculum meeting as well.

Mr. Drezek stated the determination on the assessment is local but ultimately the assessment will be ruled by the Building Principal not the superintendent. We will have a universal assessment that will be used at each building.

Mrs. Pickett added that might be helpful not having a prescribed universal tool. We are currently using assessment tools at Stowe. Ms. Middleton added we have a plan and process for the assessment.

Chairwoman Riley thanked them for their presentation

c. Indoor Air Quality & HVAC Evaluation Update

Mr. Drezek welcomed John Dague our Director of Strategic Development & Partnerships along with Fred Gerber the Town of Enfield Deput Director for the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Dague stated there is a Board policy and State law about indoor air quality and HVAC standards for schools. Since January 1, 2003, and every three years and every five years we need to conduct uniform inspections. This information will also be available for the public and will be posted on our district website and each school website. We will share preliminary findings tonight. Some of the reports did not contain the necessary required information based on new laws. Once we receive those reports we will post them on our websites for the public to access.

Mr. Dague reviewed how to understand the IAQ Reports (Parameters, Standard & Acceptable Range).

Recess:

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Picket that the Board take a brief recess at 8:14 PM. A vote by show of hands 9-0-0 passed unanimously.

The Board returned at 8:17 PM.

Chairwoman Riley informed the public that maintenance needed to quickly repair a hanging light fixture.

Mr. Dague and Mr. Gerber also reviewed how to understand the IAQ Lab Reports, IAQ findings at Enfield High School; IAQ Lab Reports at John F. Kennedy Middle School; HVAC Assessment – Pending Test Data at EHS, JFK, Eagle, PK-5 Schools, Alcorn and the Annex. He reviewed some of the limitations and noted that all of our buildings are fit for occupancy for Indoor Air Quality including microbial and HVAC function.

Mr. Jonaitis asked who is responsible for making repairs? Mr. Dague stated the town owns the buildings and has budgeted for repairs. They have a 10 year maintenance plan in place for equipment. Buildings and Grounds would contract out for any immediately needed repairs.

Chairwoman Riley thanked them for their presentation.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

a. Student Representative Update

Student Representative Kayla Surprenant reported the Rachel's Challenge Pancake Breakfast will be held on Saturday. The EHS Track & Field Team broke 4x200 relay school record. Congratulations to Ryan, Zach, Evan & Jayden. We will also compete on Friday & Saturday at Hill House for the Hill House Invitational. She gave an update about upcoming games for Girls Basketball, Wrestling, Hockey, and about Buzz Robotics upcoming events,

Student Representative Alicia Lizzotte reported that on December 13th EHS students will go outside for the Wreaths Across America Convoy. Marking Period 2 progress reports can be accessed on power school. The EHS Jazz and Marching Band will hold a concert on December 13th, The Class of 2024 will host Holiday Spirit wear. The class of 2026 will sell holiday candygrams.

- b. Wreaths Across America** – as presented
- c. Rachel's Challenge Pancake Breakfast** – as presented
- d. Special BOE Training Workshop** - as presented
- e. Early Release & Winter Vacation** - as presented
- f. Enfield Loaves & Fishes Winter Break Lunch Program** – as presented
- g. EPS Update** – as presented

8. AUDIENCES

Chairwoman Riley read a prepared statement regarding audience participation. We will allow 4 minutes for each audience member to speak.

Maureen Griffin, Abbe Road – Mrs. Griffin spoke about changing demographics in Enfield and making our town schools more attractive. She also discussed income levels. She spot about a book that addresses bias – Blind Spot. We need Enfield Public Schools to be known as being diverse. We need to do the work. We need to bring more diverse population to Enfield. We all need to broaden our perspectives.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Ryder wished Happy Chanukah to those celebrating. He provided an update about Eli Whitney school events, Special Persons Day Dance for Whitney/Memorial, he thanked the PTO's, Whitney Winterfest, and the lighting of our Town Tree with Gabby. Students will participate in the Wreaths Across America Convoy tomorrow.

Mr. Ryder provided an update on PJ Day. We had a goal at \$8,117 and we have surpassed this goal. As a district we have raised over \$45K for the past 6 years. Thank you to everyone that participated. Next year it will be held on December 13, 2024.

Mr. Ryder wished everyone a happy holiday.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked everyone involved with Career Day at EHS. She thanked Mrs. Ceniglio for promoting this event. She also thanked Mrs. Mazzone.

Mrs. LeBlanc provided the Board and audience with the Wreaths Across America schedule for tomorrow. There will also be a wreath laying ceremony that will be held at St. Patrick's Cemetery on Saturday. The trucks are coming from Lewiston Maine.

Mrs. LeBlanc spoke about an accident that occurred at the top of the EHS hill to Enfield Street. This was something that Mr. Kruzel was adamant about. Through the Chair to the Superintendent she would like us to pursue this fight with the State. Can we have our SRO's help with traffic flow? This is a safety issue. She feels bad for what happened to the bus driver. We need to do better regarding traffic concerns.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if we have ever considered using the side street that connects to EHS. Mrs. LeBlanc stated we did use it but the residents on this street do not want the gate opened. There is a reason for this.

Mr. Drezek added there was an issue with the traffic flow using that street and the gate is to remain closed. He can discuss this with the Town Manager.

Mrs. LeBlanc added there is a lot of traffic. We also have Eagle Academy traffic. Mrs. LeBlanc added Are we waiting for someone to get seriously hurt? We need to do better. She wished everyone a happy holiday and spend time with your family and recharge.

Mrs. Cushman provided an update about Edgar H. Parkman's Roar assembly. She thanked Principal Roman and Assistant Principal Barnett for the wonderful job they are doing at Parkman. She also wished everyone a wonderful holiday season.

Mrs. Pickett asked about the QR Code for the lunch link program is it for all students or just students that qualify for free/reduced lunches? Mr. Drezek stated it is for any student that wishes to participate can.

Mrs. Pickett wished everyone a happy holiday. There are many different religions and cultures that are celebrating holidays – happy holidays.

Mrs. Pickett provided an update about Enfield Street and Parkman events. She thanked the PTO's for everything they do. She also thanked Riley's for their donation for the One Book, Three Schools event.

Mrs. Pickett is extremely proud of the success of our PJ Day. She would like to see us support some of the many other clubs and programs that are fundraising. Maybe we could have some more scheduled PJ Days.

Mrs. Pickett believes there is plenty of room for collaborative work to be done. We all want to improve the academic achievements of our students. She is also interested about attendance data. This is something our Policy and Curriculum committees should be focusing on.

Mrs. Pickett spoke about our calendar for the 2024-25 school year being more inclusive. Last year a survey was done around conferences and breaks. Is there a pattern with absences before holidays or breaks and should those be our PD days? We also need to look at mandates for PD days and when we start school.

Mrs. Pickett feels we must look at the consequences for our lack of action when we know about a safety issue. Mr. Kruzel has advocated for this for years. A bus driver no longer has a job because of this. She asked for Chairwoman Riley to have the joint security committee to look into this. She would also like us to review our MOU for our SRO's to address safety concerns on Enfield Street. We can't wait until something tragic happens. She would like the joint security committee to look at the 3 schools that are on Enfield Street and reevaluate the safety around for our schools.

Mrs. Acree provided an update about Prudence Crandall and their giving tree and upcoming student events, learning about the many holiday celebrations, math/reading book swap. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

Dr. Calnen provided an update about KITE, Enfield Produce Mural Project, PLA and the next KITE meeting, Rosie Ready, SPED update. He congratulated Daniella Girard who has won an award from the State. He also reviewed the number of Head Start students that will be soon to be kindergartners. There are 35 that are eligible, and 67 students will remain at Head Start until the referral entrance process is complete for September 1st.

Mr. Kober as he previously mentioned, our goals of moving forward with planning and policies. He showed the audience the binder with our BOE policies. It will take some time to review these and streamline the process. He does not feel we should have this many detailed policies for a district this size.

Mr. Kober attended the CAFE orientation last week. They give Boards of Education a good foundational introduction about our roles as Board members.

Mr. Kober will meet with Principal Graham as their BOE liaison. He also wished everyone a merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mrs. Pickett agrees about our large policy binder. CAFE used to provide policy audits and give recommendations. That might be something to consider.

Chairwoman Riley provided an update about the goal of accountability. There are a lot of good things that are happening in our district. This is simply to get information out and educate us and the community and look at how we all can have a hand in our students success. We will look at where we fell short at target areas and where we are at now and look at our target goals. By doing this, we will all understand the 12 indicators and show us what the plan is for each indicator in order for us to move forward. We do not need to give the State a plan since we have not received any Alliance grant funding. We have a proactive plan in place. If we end up receiving funding, we will be ready to address their requirements.

Chairwoman Riley added we need to discuss our problem areas so we can propose effective solutions and have awesome conversations and presentations like we did tonight. This will not happen overnight. We understand the direction we need to go in. Bit by bit, we can make measurable progress and improvements for our kids.

Chairwoman Riley recognized one of our students who is an Eagle Scout. He built his project that is at the Enfield Food Shelf for after hours where people can drop off items and pick up items they might need. Congratulations Eric Quinn for a job well done!

Chairwoman Riley is excited to participate at Hazardville Memorial's celebration next week. She also wished everyone a happy holiday season.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Discussion & Action if any regarding Enfield Mental Health & Wellness Committee *(Tabled on 09-12-23)*

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc, that the Enfield Board of Education places the Enfield Mental Health & Wellness Committee item back on the table to discuss.

A vote by **Show-of-Hands – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairwoman Riley read what Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree provided regarding the Mental Health Committee.

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Cushman that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Mental Health Committee as presented in the packet.

Discussion:

Mrs. LeBlanc feels this ties into what was presented to us nicely with chronic absenteeism. She is glad to see where this has evolved to. You have been working on this for some time. This is important to our town. She thanked them for their persistence.

Mr. Kober is in favor of streamlining our process and is against this. We already have 10 committees. Mental Health and Wellness is very important. He would like to see them be part of the Policy or Curriculum Committee and would be in favor of combining this with another committee. He proposed an amendment if this would be a standing committee, special

committee, temporary committee or Ad Hoc committee in the original motion.

Mrs. Acree stated this is going to be special advisory committee. Mr. Kober added that makes sense. We just need to include that in the motion including the membership.

Mrs. Acree stated originally it was just going to be Dr. Calnen and myself, but we are open to any additional members. Dr. Calnen added we did not add membership to this committee. We were assuming this would be a special committee and membership cannot exceed 3 members.

Mr. Longey stated the policy does not indicate a specific number for membership. Dr. Calnen would like to keep this committee membership small and will make this easier to accomplish our goals. Having members from both caucuses is important because we can update our sides as we go along. We do need a committee that relates to Mental Health because we are currently in a mental health crises. This is overwhelming our school system and medical practitioners, emergency rooms and children's hospitals. We need a committee dedicated to looking at the mental needs of our students.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if this would be a standing committee or a special committee. Will you be working with guidance counselors and teachers? What will future Boards do if we do not have a doctor on the Board?

Mrs. Acree stated this will be a special committee. We will invite special guests to meet with us like the Enfield Police Department, talk with counselors and the next step would be to talk with key people about what is going on with the mental health of our students. We would start with principals and guidance counselors about the needs. They can give us ideas of where to focus on and then invite people to meet with us that will guide us.

Mrs. LeBlanc added we had a Suicide Prevention Committee previously and we had regular meetings. Many departments were on this committee, and we were able to accomplish a lot. When Mrs. Haughey retired, this committee fell on the wayside. Rachel's Challenge came out of that committee. A lot of good came from this committee. We currently do not have a strong partnership with the Town anymore. We are branching out and trying to form our own committee now.

Mr. Jonaitis added that bothers him. As a former teacher, we would talk to the guidance counselors or the assistant principals about student concerns. He wonders if we should communicate with the guidance counselors about what we could do without infringing upon what they are already doing.

Mrs. Acree stated we will talk to key people first about what is needed without reinventing the wheel. There are financial resources available for this work through legislation. She contacted Senator Kissel's office about this.

Mrs. Pickett stated the special committee will not be long term. Our hope is to look at a better partnership with collaboration and get to a point where this piece will continue. She is excited about this committee and your charge. She had provided some feedback to both Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree and it has been included in your document. The first item is to review data being used to identify students mental health and behavioral concerns. There are things that are happening at school. We had a SEL presentation last year about our services and the chronic absenteeism presentation today. There could also be community data that could be used. What do we know about our students needs and trends? Then we need to see what is currently being done. What are the supports that are currently in place and what is in place with our community partners. Then we would need to make some decisions about long term work.

Dr. Calnen stated that is correct. There is a reason this is such a broad document. This will

be part of our policy and we do not want to limit ourselves. If there are needs for items, we want to be as inclusive as possible, and priorities will need to be established. The first priority needs to be what are our needs and what do we currently have.

Dr. Calnen added we need to have a conduit to counselors, principals and outside resources. We will be opening up doors to multiple people. It would also be nice to make a connection with pediatrician offices.

Dr. Calnen would also like to open up our connections with KITE with their early childhood mental health committee of their own. We could possibly work collaboratively with them.

Mr. Jonaitis would like Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree to meet with our principals, coordinators and counselors to see what they want us to do. But you also need to tread lightly due to confidentiality.

Dr. Calnen added that he understands confidentiality very well

Mrs. Pickett added the Board receives notification about 911 responses and protective custody concerns. That leads directly to this committee and fully supports this special committee.

Mr. Kober suggest this temporary committee comprised with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree not to exceed one year and advance it accordingly. He can make a motion.

Chairwoman Riley asked how many members would you like on this committee and how often will you meet? Mrs. Acree stated 2 members and we discussed meeting once a month. Dr. Calnen agreed.

Chairwoman Riley asked if a staff member will be a liaison and they will open up the avenues to speak with staff members? Mr. Longey added he will work with both Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree and will get the appropriate people to meet with them. He feels they are on the right track for this committee. In your motion you need to include who is doing this, there doesn't need to be a time frame but there can be, and you have already listed your outcomes. You are on the right track.

Chairwoman Riley asked when will you know the purpose of this committee has been fulfilled? What will be your measure of success or indicator for completion? Will there be a final report? If we don't put an end date for your goal or will it end at the end of your term.

Mrs. Acree would like it to be at the end of our term. This committee will be doing a lot of work and will need time to gather information. The needs are great, and this will take longer than one year.

Mrs. Pickett believes you will have some findings about our needs and the data that was looked at. What our the needs of our students and our current structure for supports. Then we could determine the next steps or close out the committee.

Mr. Jonaitis agrees to let Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree start the process and gather information. Then they can come back and give us an update of their next steps.

Mr. Longey added Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree will submit a final report from their 2 year term about the committee. This is part of your policy. The committee will dissolve when there is a majority vote by the Board. You could add a timeline to this committee for the final report that will be given to the Board. It would be up to the Board to make this decision when to dissolve this committee by majority vote.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked Mr. Longey for being the liaison to this committee. You are the perfect

person to work with them. You can direct them to our policies and when there are any changes with legislation.

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mr. Jonaitis to amend the original motion that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Mental Health Committee as a temporary committee comprised with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree as members with Mr. Longey as the liaison during the 2023-25 BOE term.

Discussion:

Mr. Ryder asked for the word temporary to be changed to special. Mr. Kober agreed on that change.

Chairwoman Riley asked for a show of hands for the amendment that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Mental Health Committee as a special committee comprised with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree as members with Mr. Longey as the liaison during the 2023-25 BOE term.

A vote by **Show-of-Hands – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairwoman Riley asked for a roll call vote for the main motion that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Mental Health Committee as presented in the packet as a special committee comprised with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree as members with Mr. Longey as the liaison during the 2023-25 BOE term.

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

11. NEW BUSINESS: None

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Acree reported the Curriculum Committee will meet on December 20, 2023.

Mr. Jonaitis would like the committee to discuss students that are below grade level for reading and math and what is being done with curriculum. Mrs. Acree stated the agenda is set. Mrs. Pickett added we can add those items to items from the table and they will be discussed at the next scheduled Curriculum meeting.

Finance Committee: Mr. Kober reported the Finance Committee met on December 4th and the Board will review Finance reports later on the agenda. Our next Finance, Budget Committee meeting will be held on January 8, 2024.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Cushman reported the Policy Committee met on December 5, 2023 for a special meeting and we will meet again on December 19, 2023.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about Policy #9325.2 Order of Business and Meeting Conduct that was an item from the table that were to be discussed by both caucuses, and if there are specific parts of the policy we should look at? Mrs. Cushman stated the order of the agenda, the ending time and audiences.

Mr. Kober also had some suggestions to be added to the agenda. Mrs. Cushman added they are policies from the 9000 series since he was unable to attend the Policy meeting. She will add them at the next Policy meeting as items from the table.

Leadership – Chairwoman Riley reported Board Leadership will met on November 30th and

discussed our upcoming Board training workshop, reviewed the 9000 series policies and our duties as Board members. We will schedule another Board Leadership meeting prior to our new Board meeting.

PK-5 School Modernization Committee – Mr. Ryder does not have an update for the School Modernization Committee at this time.

Joint Facility – Mrs. LeBlanc reported she does not have the next meeting date. The Joint Facility Committee met on the same night as our Board Leadership meeting. n Chairwoman Riley has not received any communication regarding the next meeting date for the Joint Facilities Committee either.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder reported the JFK Building Committee cancelled the December 7th meeting. They will meet again in January.

Joint Security Committee – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Security Committee will meet on December 15, 2023.

Mrs. Pickett would like this committee to look into her concerns about safety for the 3 schools on Enfield Street. Mr. Ryder has noted this request.

Enfield Mental Health Committee – Chairwoman Riley reported we have already discussed this tonight.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mrs. LeBlanc does not have any Enfield Cultural Arts updates at this time. She attended the Policy meeting instead of this committee.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Special Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2023 be approved. Mr. Kober moved to amend the minutes as noted. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-1** passed unanimously to amend the minutes with Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2023, be approved. Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mr. Jonaitis to amend the minutes as noted. A vote by **show-of-hands 5-4-0** passed to amend the minutes with Mr. Ryder, Mrs. LeBlanc, Mrs. Pickett and Dr. Calnen in decent.

Chairwoman Riley asked for a show of hands to approve the amended November 28, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. A vote by **show-of-hands 6-3-0** passed to amend the minutes with Mr. Ryder, Mrs. LeBlanc, and Mrs. Pickett in decent.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

Month of October 2023

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mr. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of October 2023 the total expenditures amount to \$8,190,854.12, broken down between payroll totaling \$5,064,101.15 and other accounts totaling \$3,126,752.97 and;
- 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of October 2023 total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$473,418.17 broken down between payroll totaling \$413,581.63 and other accounts totaling \$59,836.54; and
- 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Month of November 2023

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mr. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of November 2023 the total expenditures amount to \$7,796,077, broken down between payroll totaling \$5,179,057.35 and other accounts totaling \$2,617,019.65 and;
- 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of November 2023 total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$770,586.38 broken down between payroll totaling \$404,981.66 and other accounts totaling \$365,604.72; and
- 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 document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Mr. Ryder reported Hazardville Memorial will hold Dec the Halls event on December 20th. Board members are invited to attend. Board members are also invited to participate in Wreaths Across America planned events being held on December 16th.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Kober to adjourn the Regular Meeting of December 12 2023.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 9:42 PM.

Scott Ryder
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary