

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 23, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on April 23, 2024.

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. Invention Convention Student

Mr. Drezek welcomed our STEAM Coordinator Elan Beebe and Crandall student Cameron McIntosh. Mr. Cameron explained how he invented the “Cool Comb” and how he worked with EHS student Ryan.

Mrs. Beebe showed Cameron’s video on his invention that was submitted to the State for semifinals. He along with three other students made it to the finals that were held at UCONN last May. He is the only student from Enfield moving forward to Michigan this year on June 5-9th.

Mr. Ryder congratulated Cameron on a great job. You mentioned teaming up with a high school student. How did you get involved with Ryan? Mr. McIntosh stated his fourth grade teacher Mrs. Bruce knew Ryan and we would meet on Teams at first, then we would meet at the library and would work on the project.

Mr. Ryder asked him if he has a patent attorney yet? Mr. McIntosh hopes he has one.

Mrs. Pickett also congratulated him on a great job. She also thanked his teacher Mrs. Bruce and his parents for their support. She asked him if he is going to the nationals in Michigan and how can we support you? Mr. McIntosh stated he is planning to go to Michigan. Mrs. Beebe stated we are fundraising for his trip to the nationals and are accepting donations. We have received some from the ETA, the ESAA and USA Hauling. Next we will talk to the school PTO’s.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Cameron and knows he will represent Enfield well.

Mrs. LeBlanc remembered your invention at the JFK Invention Convention and your first comb.

Seeing how you developed it is great. You spoke about problem solving in your video. This is something she would purchase. She is excited to hear you are going to Nationals. This will be an exciting trip to see all kinds of inventions. Good luck and congratulations.

Mrs. Acree also wished him good luck and congratulated him for representing Enfield and Prudence Crandall so well. We are all very proud of you.

Chairwoman Riley stated seeing your first prototype and your finished product is great. Will you bring both with you to Nationals? Mr. Cameron stated he will bring both with him so they can see the finished product. Chairwoman Riley stated this is such a wonderful idea. We are all very proud of you.

Mrs. Beebe thanked everyone that came tonight to support Cameron. Ryan Dennis is here from EHS, along with Mrs. Bruce and Ms. James his teacher.

b. EHS Students

Mr. Drezek welcomed our 2023-34 Teacher of the Year Armondo Ramos.

William Bergman introduced himself as a unified sports athlete and a junior at EHS. Brennan Archer stated he is an EHS senior and unified sports helper. Mr. Ramos thanked the Board for the invitation to attend tonight so we can honor the amazing work of both William and Brennan in unified sports. These are two exemplary students. We are fortunate to have students that express kindness and leadership. These two students have stood out and have made Enfield a better place. They were selected to represent Enfield at the State level for Winners in Unified Sports and will be honored at the Michaels Cup Unified Sports Banquet. He spoke about each students character and dedication to Unified Sports. Will was selected to attend the Hobie Leadership seminar and was chosen by the National Federation of High Schools to attend several leadership summits. This work led him to be selected to the National Student Advisory Council for a two year appointment. He thanked them both for their inspiration. He has learned more from them than they have learned from him as their teacher and coach. He also congratulated both Brennan and Will.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Mr. Ramos for everything you are doing for our Unified Sports program. She thanked both students for making EHS an inclusive community. She asked Brennan about his plans for after high school. Mr. Archer stated he will go to Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and will play soccer also. He will major in marketing and would also like to continue helping with Unified Sports.

Mrs. Pickett would like to see you become a teacher. Thank you for being so involved in our community. Mr. Archer stated he has thought of that.

Mrs. Pickett asked Will what was your favorite part of Unified Sports. Mr. Bergman likes seeing the athletes excel. He has a specific student in mind where he has seen him struggle and then find his place. He was a member on the Unified Basketball team and this student grew to excel and it makes you feel really good to impact someone positively and help them to grow.

Mrs. Acree also congratulated Brennan and Will for their leadership and dedication. She wished Brennan good luck in college next year. Thank you both for doing a great job.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked Will when you travelled to the leadership conferences did you enjoy this or was it overwhelming? Mr. Bergman stated it was an enjoyable experience. The first time he went, he went with a good friend Jacob Barnes. That helped me to be comfortable and that helped him to find his place. He was then nominated to be on the National Federation of High Schools National Student Advisory Council. When you attend these events you notice that you are not the only person that has these values. You are able to create relationships that you

really value. These people have very similar stories and similar struggles.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she can feel a bit intimidated when she travels alone. She asked him if he still plays an instrument. Mr. Bergman stated he does it on the side. When United Sound turned into a class, it did not fit into his schedule. A family friend is teaching me about the guitar.

Mrs. LeBlanc congratulated Brennan on his college plans. She would love for you to come back as a teacher here in Enfield. She appreciates your dedication to Unified Sports especially playing soccer yourself and being a captain takes a lot of time and commitment. Your sister Maddie is also involved with Unified Sports. She was very excited to hear that you would be recognized here tonight. You are a great student athlete and leader. We appreciate hearing about students like you and Will. You are both making a difference in our school and community. Thank you.

Mr. Jonaitis thanked Brennan for everything you are doing. He also congratulated Will. You are a wonderful speaker.

Chairwoman Riley asked Brennan what do you get the most satisfaction from Unified Sports? Mr. Archer stated he likes to make people happy and seeing them having a good time. He also likes being their friend and someone they can talk to. Being there with them and Mr. Ramos makes him happy. He would like to be part of this forever.

Chairwoman Riley stated you are awesome. What sports do you participate in with Unified Sports? Brennan stated he has played all sports but chose to only play soccer. Will stated he plays travel basketball but due to his schedule he will only participate in a couple of events.

Chairwoman Riley thanked them for coming tonight. She is amazed by everything you are doing and is very proud of you both. Thank you.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

a. Student Representative Update

EHS Student Representative Kayla Surprenant reported EHS held a track and field quad meet last Wednesday and competed against a team from New Zealand. Lamplighters will hold their Mary Poppins play this weekend on Friday and Saturday. JFK grade 8 students will visit EHS tomorrow. The Enfield Arts Show was a huge success. Buzz Robotics competed in the World Championship held in Houston, TX.

EHS Student Representative Alicia reported the EHS Awards and Scholarships will be held On May 20th. A Senior information meeting will be held on April 26th. Class Elections will be held on April 29th. SAT scores have come out and Juniors can retake them this fall for better scores. The English Department will hold Poetry reading daily during April. Scholarships are available for students in the Guidance Office.

b. Early Release Day – as presented

c. FY2024-25 Budget Public Hearing – as presented

d. 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.

Rob Anderson, Bass Drive – Mr. Anderson spoke about transparency and Board mistrust in the community. You will have a superintendent search committee. He does not think you should

have an even number of members on this committee. He would like the Board to explain your plan for this committee for transparency. He does not think having a survey for staff to complete is a good idea. How will you find candidates? Staff will want someone they like and will make their lives easier.

Maureen Griffin – Mrs. Griffin feels having staff complete a survey is a good idea. They know what is going on in our schools. She sent an e-mail to the Board. Our staff and administrators have dealt with a lot. We have lost our superintendent and Mr. Longey does not want this position. Our district has received so much negativity. Our kids are too important. She urged Board members to go to the CAFE website and review what is required to be a good Board member. Treat others with dignity and respect.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Ryder reminded everyone about the early release on Wednesday. School Bus Driver appreciating day was today. He thanked all of our school bus drivers for everything they do for our students daily and for transporting our students to field trips and sporting events. He was there today at JFK to thank them. He also encouraged families to thank our bus drivers.

Mr. Ryder stated our Kid Mayor Gabby Diaz from Prudence Crandall and is now at Eli Whitney. She is addressing mental health with her platform. He displayed her flags with messages. The supplies she used were donated by Donors Choose. We thank Gabby and all the donors for this great idea.

Mrs. Pickett spoke about the public comments made at the Town Council meeting by the Mayor. She shared true facts from EdSight about high needs, special needs and about our special education funding. During Covid, we used temporary funding to purchase iPads, masks and hired additional staff to help our students. We need cooperation from our Town Council members about our financial needs. We need to discuss our school modernization plans. We need long term solutions.

Mrs. Pickett also spoke about discipline and arrest data and how it should be looked at. Mr. Jonaitis previously spoke about our curriculum being woke. We have worked hard with our curriculum. If you believe there is inappropriate items in our curriculum, please show it to us. We have reviewed our curriculum and standards and recently selected new textbooks. As elected officials, we need to share factual information.

Mrs. Pickett stated progress reports will be coming out on April 30th. She attended the Arts Festival. It was wonderful. He son had a piece being displayed. She thanked everyone involved with this amazing event.

Mrs. Pickett asked via the superintendent to the Chair about the focus groups being held at the schools for the Vision of a Graduate presentation. Mr. Drezek stated yes the schools will all hold them. Mrs. Pickett asked about the attendance at these events and how many have been held. Mr. Drezek does not know how many have held them or about the attendance at these events.

Mrs. Pickett stated Enfield Street and Parkman held their presentation last night. It was well attended. She would like to receive some feedback on this to make sure we are reaching all our families.

Mrs. Pickett asked about the MOU and hopes this can be addressed at the next Joint Security Committee meeting since we will be hiring security guards soon. We also need to review dismissal procedures and how our security program will support this. She would also like an update on the signage on Enfield Street.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Youth Services for their prom dress program. They have received 50 new prom dresses that were donated from the Ana Grace Project and Alexanders Boutique. She thanked them for their generous donation and for selecting Enfield to receive these prom dresses.

Mrs. Pickett stated Enfield Street lost a beloved staff member. Trish Boucher knew every student and her students all loved her. She impacted everyone she came into contact with. She has left a lasting legacy and will be missed deeply.

Mrs. Acree also thanked Gabby Diaz for her mental health project. She also attended the Arts Festival. She loved seeing all the students creativity and talent from all our students. She also thanked the JFK Jazz Band and Solists for performing at the Arts festival. The music was wonderful.

Mr. Kober also expressed his condolences to the family and staff members that knew Trish Boucher. Her presence will be missed by members in our community.

Mr. Kober also stated today is School Bus Driver appreciation. He thanked all our bus drivers for everything they do for our students.

Mr. Kober stated the Board and Town Council received correspondence on discipline. The Board receives monthly sanitized reports. We do not see student names or any demographics. What the Mayor was trying to relay is that some arrests are warranted, and some discipline will result in suspensions.

Mr. Kober has spoken about transparency and is working with administration about the budget process and sharing information about discipline. This information may be important for the public to understand and see why students are being expelled or even arrested. This information can show what is going on in our schools and about classroom disruptions. He did reach out across the aisle for bi-partisan support. We are all here to make positive change. This is something he would like to implement during this term to get us to a stronger place with public trust. This can all help with some of the questions we receive as public officials.

Mrs. LeBlanc also attended the Arts Festival. She loves seeing the handmade bowls the students make. The JFK monopoly game was great. The Senior Art Portfolios were also amazing and very personal. She thanked everyone that participated at the Arts Festival.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked via the chair to the Superintendent about a group purchasing books to be donated to our schools. Who should they contact? Mr. Drezek stated it should go through Adrienne Snow and Michelle. Middleton.

Mrs. LeBlanc also thanked our school bus drivers for everything they do for our students. You are the first face our kids see each morning. April is Autism awareness month. Early intervention can benefit our students lives greatly. Autism is a developmental disability. Trish Boucher wrote a book about an autistic child. She can share this book with anyone that would like to read it.

Mrs. LeBlanc promised Mr. Kober a discussion about our budget. The budget will list an approved amount. When you go to the State website, the amount will be different because they will include in-kind services and buildings and grounds services. That will affect per student expenditures. Buildings and grounds is not included in our budget because it is included in the Towns budget. If you have any other questions about in-kind services she would be happy to discuss this further with you.

Mrs. LeBlanc also spoke about the e-mail Mrs. Pickett received from the State that she shared with members of the Town Council about comparing budgets and what is going on at the State.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we received an e-mail from Mr. Kober about the Enfield BOE transparency initiative. We discussed this as a caucus and some of our concerns is this should be a town initiative not just a Board of Education initiative. Is this something you have considered?

Mr. Kober stated that is something he had not considered but it would be a more holistic approach and he would be open to that.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated Munis is our current system we use for our financial reports. It is a report of everything financial and is reviewed during Finance monthly meetings. This report is certified each month.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the last early release day, we had police officers at EHS, and it was beneficial. It would be great if tomorrow we could also have a police officer there to assist with traffic. The bus drivers appreciated this greatly.

Mrs. LeBlanc feels it is important to have staff input with our Superintendent Search Committee. Our staff are leaders in our education system, and they know what we should be looking for. Receiving input will help us obtain a candidate profile.

Mrs. Leblanc added she looks forward to continuing future conversations with Mr. Kober.

Mr. Jonaitis wished everyone a happy Passover and stands with our Jewish community members. He also expressed his dismay with what is occurring on our ivy league campuses and is spreading to other schools. He stands behind our Jewish people around the world. Shalom.

Mr. Jonaitis addressed Mrs. Pickett's comments and the mayor is not spreading misinformation. He is giving his honest assessments. There have been some disproportional arrests. He cannot believe that Waterbury, Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford and other cities do not have any arrests being made. Do we know how many students are repeat offenders? He does not believe kids are being arrested without just cause.

Dr. Calnen also attended the Arts Festival and truly enjoyed it like he does every year. The music and vocalists were amazing and very inspiring. We also had some pre-k art there this year. This event has spread throughout all of our grades and schools.

Dr. Calnen stated vaccination rates have dropped and Measles are on the rise. Vaccinations are safe and effective. Polio is also on the rise as well. Please keep an eye on these two diseases. Please vaccinate your children.

Mr. Jonaitis addressed Mrs. Pickett comment about the curriculum. Public education has always been subject to liberal points of view. We all have different opinions on what woke means and our viewpoints are not the same.

Chairwoman Riley stated Enfield Public Schools received recognition as one of the best music education communities. Congratulations to our music department. She also attended the Arts Festival and a wake for our teacher on Friday. She expressed her condolences to the family. Our hearts and prayers are with you. She also congratulated our students that participated in the Arts Festival. You have music, art and food all in one place. The senior art portfolios were amazing.

Chairwoman Riley stated at our last meeting Mrs. Acree mentioned Maddie who did a project bringing kits to cancer patients. She was at her parents house over the weekend and picked up an ECHN pamphlet and there was Maddie with her story on the pamphlet. Congratulations again.

Chairwoman Riley also thanked all our school bus drivers. Her father was a school bus driver for 15 years after he retired. This is a hard job and is not for the faint of heart. She also thanked her families bus driver Maureen who is an amazing person and wonderful bus driver.

Chairwoman Riley stated we will address the superintendent search committee tonight. What you may have heard is just a rumor. Stayed tuned and we will be as transparent as we can be.

Chairwoman Riley stated Leadership presented our budget at the Town Council meeting. We discussed special needs and funding mechanism. High needs is the way the State of Connecticut has lumped three categories together for reporting purposes. This is also an Alliance District Indicator which there are 12 indicators in total. High Needs includes: special needs (students with a 504 or IEP), English Language Learners (English is not their main language) and the last is Free and Reduced Lunch (these students receive SNAP, TFA, children in Head Start, Homeless Children, Runaway Children and households that fall below the Federal Income Eligibility guidelines). This is who falls under High Needs. Funding comes from the State of Connecticut for all students with the Education Cost Sharing. Special Needs students with 504 or IEP's will receive separate funding from the State from the Excess Cost Grant. Excess costs will reimburse us once the cost of educating each student special needs student is more than 4 ½ times the standard per pupil cost. Excess cost was supposed to reimburse all that remaining cost to us, but we have not been funded this yet by the State of Connecticut at 100% of that remaining Excess cost grant. That is why we always say education needs to be fully funded. By the State not fully funding our Excess Cost by every student that is special needs has shorted our school district a lot of money every year. This is something taxpayers need to make up. If our students with special needs need support, they will get it. She is not putting blame on anyone. She is just explaining how the State of Connecticut groups our students and fails to make good on the laws that are supposed to help us support our students with needs. As our special need numbers increase, so does the cost to support them. This is why we are in a deficit.

Chairwoman Riley stated we can receive grants for English Learner students from the State. The Federal Government funds the school breakfast and lunch programs. The money we receive from the Federal Government can only be used for that purpose.

Chairwoman Riley added High Needs is the big category, special needs, English Language Learners and free/reduced lunch. Outplacement costs goes along with special needs costs. Special needs costs can vary based on the needs of that student.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. POLICY REVISION – SECOND READING

Mrs. Cushman moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education approves the second reading of Policy #6111 School Calendar(s) as presented.

Discussion

Mr. Kober stated he is not in favor of this policy and will vote no. He would like to see additional parameters set for the start of school.

A vote by **roll-call – 7-2-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis and Mr. Kober in dissent.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

a. APPROVAL OF THE FY2025 SCHOOL READINESS GRANT

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education approves the School Readiness Grant as presented and authorize the Superintendent to endorse it.

Discussion

Mr. Kober asked about Kite serving as the School Readiness Council and asked if it has always been this way? Dr. Calnen stated the OEC designates a community organization as the administrator. Kite has always been ours.

Mrs. Cushman added they also make sure the goals of the grant are carried out. The goals were not included in our packet. She would like to see the goals for the grant. Dr. Calnen stated there is a list, but he does not have it.

Mrs. Pickett added the grant is for 28 preschool students. We will ensure that these slots are filled to attend our high quality preschool program. She wished we could receive more because there is such a need.

Mrs. Cushman will reach out to Brianna Beckstrand to receive the goals.

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

b. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING THE 2024 REGULAR SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS – REVISED

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education approves the revised 2024 Regular Schedule of Meetings for the June 11th June 25th and August 27th Board meetings as presented.

Discussion

Mr. Ryder stated we could not hear each other talk, that is how loud the music was outside.

Mrs. LeBlanc added you could hear the music being played while watching the Board meeting on TV.

Chairwoman Riley added parking was also a challenge. We have asked for Buildings and Grounds to reserve parking places for us.

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

Chairwoman Riley added since we are doing this 30 days in advance, these meetings will be considered as regular meetings and not special meetings.

c. RECEIPT OF AND ACTION UPON RECOMMENDATION OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS CONCERNING TEACHER CONTRACT NON-RENEWALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 10-151

Mrs. Cushman moved, seconded by Mr. Jonaitis that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Superintendent to notify the appropriate certified teachers about their Contract Non-Renewals in Accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 10-151.

Discussion

Mr. Jonaitis agrees with what Mr. Drezek explained. How many of our teachers are watching this meeting? He would encourage our principals to share this message with any staff they will

be non-renewing. Our staff is panicking. Your explanation makes sense.

Mr. Drezek stated traditionally he would hand these out to staff members. We cannot personally hand out 121 letters. We discuss a lot of things in our meetings and people are watching this meeting. We talk about equity a lot. We were named an Alliance District, and they are very specific on what the money can be spent on. We have been doing this and we were promised this money but did not get it. Our teachers are not doing anything wrong. They are doing everything correctly and for the right reason. Until we have an adopted budget, we need to do this. There are 36 Alliance districts and 35 of them are receiving funding. We are not receiving any funding and do not know why. The 20 of you need to continue to work together.

Mr. Jonaitis stated when it comes to the Alliance District and what I said previously, he can honestly now say I wish I knew then what I know now. This is hitting us right between the eyes.

Mr. Drezek stated when Chairwoman Riley first met with me she wanted a better understanding for herself. We have provided you with presentations about the indicators. Any one of these indicators are allowable expenses for the 12 indicators. We are already doing it without receiving the funding that was promised to us.

Mr. Jonaitis stated a full explanation is needed to avoid rumors. He hopes our principals share your explanation to our staff receiving non-renewal notices.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated in our meeting with the Town Council, we all learned that we have a common enemy that is the State of Connecticut. We have contacted our legislators. We have an election coming up and we need to look at who can be a voice for Enfield in Hartford. It is very frustrating as a Chair. She has learned so much about funding. How can one Alliance District not receive any funding? Other towns around us have received funding. She does not want any high needs or special needs family to feel they are a burden or are unwelcome. We need representation in Hartford. The calculations they use at the State are also frustrating. We need more supports for our students. Our students are struggling across the board.

Mrs. Pickett agrees that we have not received Alliance District funding. We also need to put our funding to better use for education and not with armed guards. She does not want to see us lose any staff. Some of our staff have come to Enfield from other towns and districts. She wished we were not in this situation.

Mr. Kober asked via the Chair to the Superintendent about the money in question regarding the Alliance District. Is that \$1.4 million per year? Mr. Drezek stated that is the calculation from the state. Mr. Kober stated that is \$2.8 million for the last 2 years. We have 121 non-tenured employees. If we opened up the books and changed amounts to zero what would be the actual worst case scenario and what would be the dollar amount? Mr. Drezek stated for all 121 staff members? He does not know that amount. You would not be able to open up school with that many fewer staff members.

Mr. Kober stated he tried to come up with an amount and it would be around \$7 or \$8 million dollars for those non-tenured staff. Even with the Alliance funding we would still be short. This might tie into with what Mrs. Pickett stated about funding education better. This is only a slice of the pie and not the whole pie.

Mrs. LeBlanc added the 121 staff letters that will be given out, there are some staff members that we cannot lose. We need our special education teachers. We still will need to meet the needs of the district. She added that Mr. Kober's approach is not accurate. She reviewed a 10 year comparison of budgets comparing the Town and School budgets. She can share this with Board members. It has been a long time of not receiving adequate funding. Enrollment

numbers have declined but 1 out of 4 students receive special education services. There is only so much our teachers can do and they want to help all our kids. We need to look at our district as a whole. The budget is more in-depth than what Mr. Kober took into consideration.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if the number of special education students the teacher works with is fixed. Mr. Drezek stated yes, and this is by law. Mr. Jonaitis added some of the non-renewed teachers will need to stay.

Mr. Drezek stated this is why the Board has just non-renewed all non-tenured teachers. There is no way we can lay off 121 teachers. Some that receive this letter will be told to throw the letter out. Legally, we need to notify teachers. If this gets worst and we need to look at tenured staff, that is a whole other process that is also dictated by the State of Connecticut General Statute. We are simplifying something that is awful so the Board will be covered in the event we do not know what our funding will be. You will also need to look at teacher certifications. This is a huge puzzle, but the Board needs to take this action prior to May 1st.

Mr. Jonaitis stated in our history, we have used attrition to cover areas. Have we ever laid off employees? Mr. Drezek stated we have. Mr. Longey was rifted. When he first started, we needed to let go 60 staff members. We have more non-tenured staff now.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated if we received the Alliance money could it be used for staffing. Mr. Drezek stated yes it could be used for staffing. We could have shifted the money around to cover any of those indicators. What we are doing is what the State wants Alliance Districts to do. We recognized our needs and did it proactively. We have collaboratively worked for things together with the Town Council. The 20 of you did not put us in this mess.

Chairwoman Riley stated this is not something she likes to do either. We are doing all we can. We spoke with the members of Town Council, and we still need to wait and keep trying. The goal is to keep everyone.

Mr. Jonaitis added it is not over until it is over.

Mrs. Pickett urged everyone to attend the public hearing.

A vote by **roll-call – 6-1-2** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc in dissent and Mr. Kober and Mrs. Pickett abstaining.

MOTION TO MOVE AN ITEM ON THE AGENDA:

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Kober that the Enfield Board of Education moves Items #11d, 113, 11f and 11g to be addressed after Item #17.

Discussion:

Mr. Kober stated the reason we will move these items is so the Board can meet in Executive Session prior to addressing them in open session.

Chairwoman Riley stated that is correct, we will come back and vote on those items publicly.

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

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Acree reported the Curriculum Committee met on April 18th. We discussed Teacher development plans. Our next meeting will be held on May 16th.

Finance Committee: Mr. Kober reported the Finance Committee met on April 1st. We will review financial reports later on tonight's agenda. Our next meeting will be held on May 6th.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Cushman reported the Policy Committee did not meet on April 17th. We will hold a special meeting on April 30th. Our next regular meeting will be held on May 21st.

Leadership – Chairwoman Riley reported Board Leadership met on April 3rd. We discussed agenda items and we met with members of the Town Council. We will also have quarterly Finance budget updates. We will schedule another meeting for next week.

13. LIAISON REPORTS

Joint Facility – Mr. Jonaitis reported the Joint Facilities Committee discussed roofs and the state is holding us up with paperwork. He believes the first roof to be done will be the library.

Mr. Ryder added the referendum has 16 roofs that need to be done.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder reported Mr. Daigle will provide us with an update at the May 13th meeting.

Joint Security Committee – Chairwoman Riley reported the Joint Security Committee met on April 5th and will meet again on May 10th. She will ask about the signs. The MOU is currently with the lawyers. They also added a second captain to oversee the School Resource Officers.

Mr. Kober added they are currently accepting applications for those positions.

Enfield Mental Health Committee – Mrs. Acree reported the Enfield Mental Health Committee met last Thursday with Mr. White and Ms. Carroll. We discussed the Uplift Program for trauma informed care and the impact on students and staff to recognize signs of trauma.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mrs. LeBlanc reported ECAC committee met on April 2nd, but she was unable to attend. She will have Mr. Ryder post the link for this committee on the Enfieldpto.com site.

School Reports/Updates:

Mr. Ryder provided an update about happenings/events at Eli Whitney. They will hold a Blood Drive on Wednesday in honor of Bradley and Grace Law from 1-6 PM. The grade 5 students will plant trees for arbor day on May 29th. He will check on Mr. Kruzel's tree. They have a lot of end of year events coming, so please look at the newsletter or go to the enfieldpto.com website.

Mr. Kober provided an update about happenings/events at Henry Barnard. Kindergarten registration waivers are available. The grade 1 family night will be held on April 25th. PTO fundraiser will start on May 1st. Family Music night will be held on May 21st with Ms. Renee. Grade 2 family night will be held on May 13th. Please look at the Big Cat newsletter for other updates and events.

Mrs. Pickett provided an update about happenings/events at Enfield Street. The ESS PTO sponsored a Science Assembly and Ice cream social. They will hold a book fair on Wednesday. Parkman held a BMX event, and a math extravaganza event will be held on Thursday. Please look at your newsletters for upcoming events.

Mrs. Acree provided an update about happenings/events at Prudence Crandall, she attended the one book one school event at the library on April 17th. Students will also be reading a graphic novel called the Lunch Lady. Field day t-shirts will be available to purchase until the

end of the week. Please look at the Crandall newsletter for other important information. The teacher experience awards started to take place with students. Grade 5 students will take part in the dangers of vaping program with Enfield Social Services on April 29th.

Dr. Calnen provided an update about KITE. PLA class #6 will hold a tag sale event on May 9th. PFlag has 2 scholarships available for graduating students to apply for. He also discussed the Child First program, and the Enfield Food Shelf walk for hunger on May 4 at Dunkin Park. The Community Access and Equity Fair will be held on May 4th at the State Armory in Hartford. Enfield Loaves and Fishes will hold a Trivia Night on May 11th. The Head Start will launch their self-assessment on May 1st. The Head Start Health Advisory Committee will meet on May 15th.

Chairwoman Riley reported Hazardville Memorial is selling Ringling Brothers Circus tickets on May 4th and Yard Goat tickets for May 19th if you are interested. May 6-10 is teacher appreciation week.

Chairwoman Riley reported Buzz Robotics is an amazing group. She went to the Big E to see them compete in the New England District Championship competition. Mrs. Marr explained to her how the competition works and one of the students showed her around. They placed 6th and their robot malfunctioned but the continued to compete and played defense to help another team out. They also won the team spirit award for outstanding imagery and enthusiasm. They were in Houston TX this week for the world championship. She is not sure where they ended up but hopes they did good. Sophie Carrier was one of five students that was chosen on the Dean's list in recognition for her outstanding contributions and leadership on the team. This is the first time Buzz has had a student recognized on the Dean's list. Kudos to her and the Buzz Team.

14. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-1** passed with Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

15. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

Month of March 2024

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

- The month of February 2024 the total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$709,561.74, broken down between payroll totaling \$489,746.11 and other accounts totaling \$219,815.63 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 documented.

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 March 2024 total expenditures amount to \$9,617,442.39 broken down between payroll totaling \$7,682,614.60 and other accounts totaling \$1,934,827.79 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 documented.

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

No Line Item Transfers.

16. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Mr. Ryder reported that Board members have received their invitations to attend Adult Education Graduation Ceremony being held on June 6th at the Annex.

Mr. Kober added we also received a letter from Mr. Longey declining the Superintendent appointment.

MOTION TO EXTEND MEETING PAST 10:00 PM

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Dr. Calnen that the Enfield Board of Education extends the April 23, 2024 Regular Board meeting past 10:00 PM.

A vote by **roll-call – 7-2-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis and Mr. Kober in dissent.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Kober moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education enter into Executive Session for Matter(s) Related to Personnel and Matter(s) Related to Collective Bargaining.

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

Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey joined the Board in Executive Session at 9:33 PM.

Mr. Ryder left the meeting at 9:34 PM.

No Board action occurred while in Executive Session.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION:

The Board returned to open session at 10:14 PM.

11. NEW BUSINESS - Continued

d. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING ESTABLISHING A SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE

Chairwoman Riley read the charge of the Superintendent Search Committee. The committee will consist of Board Leadership members.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Dr. Calnen that the Enfield Board of Education approves establishing a Superintendent Search Committee comprised with Board Leadership.

Discussion

Mr. Kober stated he is in favor of the committee. We are not hiring a firm to conduct this search. He would prefer additional membership be included on the committee and he would

also like the committee to be comprised of 2 or 3 members. He would prefer 3 members to avoid conflicts with voting and reviewing applications. The charge of the committee is on track, and we have the right goals in mind. He agrees getting feedback from all stakeholders is important. Due to the size and makeup of this committee, he will not vote in favor of this committee.

Mr. Jonaitis agrees with what Mr. Kober stated. He would rather see the makeup of the committee be 3 or 4 members.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Chairwoman Riley. It is important that any candidate sees that we are a unified front. Equal representation is important. Having Board Leadership involved makes sense and both caucuses feel supported. She agrees with Mr. Kober about receiving feedback from all stakeholders being important so we can select a candidate that matches the qualities we are looking for.

A vote by **roll-call – 6-2-0** passed with Mr. Jonaitis and Mr. Kober in dissent.

e. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING APPOINTING AN INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mr. Kober that the Enfield Board of Education approves appointing Andrew B. Longey as the Interim Superintendent effective May 21, 2024.

Discussion

Mr. Kober stated there are policies and statutes in place that we must adhere to regarding appointing an Interim Superintendent not to exceed 180 days. We need an Interim Superintendent to fill the vacancy with Mr. Drezek leaving at the end of May. We were all very excited when Mr. Longey showed interest in the position. Unfortunately for various reasons he has declined the Superintendent position but has expressed interest in filling the Interim Superintendent position. He is excited to vote for him to guide us through this transition to hire our next superintendent.

A vote by **roll-call – 7-0-1** passed with Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

Chairwoman Riley asked Mr. Longey to explain his next steps.

Mr. Longey stated the first step in the search is to develop a profile of the Superintendent the community is looking for. This will start tomorrow. A survey has been developed to obtain feedback for all stakeholders. This will go out to students, parents, staff and community members. We will place a link on the front page of the Enfield Public Schools website tomorrow where you can complete the survey. At 4 PM tomorrow, a full social media blast will go out urging families to complete the survey. We will allow 2 weeks for stakeholders to complete the survey in order for all voices to be heard. We will compile the data, develop a profile, and share the results with the Leadership Committee so we can develop questions and start the process for the type of superintendent this community is looking for.

f. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING CSEA/SEUI PARAPROFESSIONAL UNION CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Dr. Calnen that the Enfield Board of Education approves the CSEA/SEUI Paraprofessional Union Contract Agreement as presented.

Discussion

Mr. Kober stated we reviewed the tentative agreement during our Executive Session and

reasonable adjustments have been made. He feels this agreement is fair and he will vote in favor of this contract agreement.

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

g. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING LOCAL 1303-46 SECRETARY/CAFETERIA UNION CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education approves Local 1303-46 Secretary/Cafeteria Union Contract Agreement as presented.

Discussion

Mr. Kober stated we reviewed the tentative agreement during our Executive Session and

reasonable adjustments have been made. He feels this agreement is fair and he will vote in favor of this contract agreement.

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

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Kober to adjourn the Regular Meeting of April 23, 2024.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Scott Ryder
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary