

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 27, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on August 27, 2024.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Chairwoman Riley.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Janet Cushman
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Janet Cushman
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**
5. **ROLL CALL:**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Philip Kober

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Interim Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent and Ms. Michelle Middleton, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

Chief Fox provided the Board with a detailed presentation about the Enfield School Security Program. He reviewed the process used for vetting applicants, LEOSA & HE-218 Eligibility, Training, Attire & Equipment, Physical Intervention Standards, staffing at EHS, Eagle Academy & JFK, and future staffing.

Chief Fox introduced each of the SSO's and the schools they are assigned to: Dan Casale, Eli Whitney; Richard Conlon, Eagle Academy; Jerel DeBerry, Prudence Crandall; Jerry Dowd, Hazardville Memorial School; Joe Fillmore, Henry Barnard; Fred Harpin, Enfield Street School; Ed Therian, Stowe Early Learning Center; Frank Torres and Captain Bryan Nolan who will be the SSO Program Supervisor.

Board members thanked Chief Fox for the great presentation and for the SSO's for being here tonight. Chief Fox addressed Board members questions about the program.

Chairwoman Riley thanked them for coming tonight and addressing our questions about the SSO program. She also thanked the SSO's for being here and for protecting our kids. She also thanked the Enfield Police Department for placing the speed limit signs and warnings for passing school buses in front of the Town Hall.

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- a. **Nutrition Services Update** – as presented
- b. **Head Start Time Adjustment** – as presented
- c. **Student Transportation** – as presented
- d. **Welcome Back Students** – as presented
- e. **EPS Update**

Mr. Longey added that the State funded breakfast program from last year has ended. We will return to paid breakfast for students that do not qualify for free or reduced meals. Students eligible for free and or reduced meals can receive a free breakfast and lunch per day. He also

encouraged all families to complete the free and or reduced lunch application. This form can be found on our website under Nutrition Services and schools also have copies available.

Mr. Longey provided an update on staffing. We still have vacancies in shortage areas, and we are looking for special education staff. We will utilize long term subs for now. We are also looking for paraprofessionals.

Mr. Longey provided an update about our finances. We received news that \$275K money from the States ARP and ESSR funds will be set aside for us to use for our new reading and most of the new math program.

Mr. Longey welcomed our new HR Director, Dr. Andrew Berrios that the Board approved on August 26th. Mr. Dave Iacobucci has been named as the Interim JFK Principal while we conduct a job search and interview for a new principal. Shannon Kudryk will fill in as an Interim Assistant JFK Principal. JFK will be fully staffed for the start of school. Our hope is to fill this position by September 24th. We will be looking for JFK parent input. He introduced Dr. Berrios.

Dr. Berrios thanked the Board for your vote of confidence and for believing in him. He thanked Central Office Leadership and his JFK family for everything. We have great staff and educators at JFK and the thanked them all for everything they do for our students. He thanked the Enfield Police Department, Fire Department, and EMT's for all their support over the years at JFK. He also thanked his family and looks forward to serving all Enfield staff in this new role.

8. AUDIENCES

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

Christina Lange, South Road – Ms. Lange spoke about Racial Justice. She enjoyed listening to Chief Fox and attended the SSO meet & greet. She asked if they have received de-escalation training. She distributed materials to each Board member. She spoke about our student arrests compared to other districts. She would also like to see us collect more student data.

Maureen Griffin, Abbe Road – Mrs. Griffin spoke about the SSO program. We should be tracking more data and protecting student confidentiality. Parents should be informed about restraints. This will be a tough year, but we will make do. Remember where these cuts have come from. She urged everyone to respect our kids. They have lost a lot with the budget cuts. Our staff are doing more with less.

Crystal Agvant, Lori Drive – Ms. Agvant stated her son previously attended a parochial school is now at EHS. She has concerns about safety with parent drop-off and pickup at EHS. The traffic situation is very problematic. She is happy to hear that when they hire additional SSO's they will be able to assist with traffic control on Enfield Street.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Ryder welcomed our students and staff back. He thanked our staff for everything they will be doing for our students. Our staff will be doing more with less help. He urged principals to copy him on any of your weekly updates and he will add them to Enfieldpto.com. He urged parents to download our new Parent Square application that will eventually replace our robo call system. Parent Square will be used to notify parents about many different items.

Mrs. Acree also welcomed back everyone for the 2024-25 school year including our new Superintendent Mr. Moccio. She is hopeful to see us rebuild our district as we face some challenges along the way. She looks forward to hearing about student accomplishments and successes. Lets not focus on what we lost but what we can do with the resources we have.

She wished everyone good luck and a successful school year.

Mrs. Pickett also welcomed Mr. Moccio and thanked Mr. Longey for his leadership. She thanked our staff and believes in them. She thanked the Enfield Police Department for the SSO Meet & Greet. We need to meet our student's needs. She is concerned about our students safety in our schools including arrival and dismissal times on route 5. We need to track our student's needs. She would like to see school zone signs posted at our schools. Prevention matters and saves lives. Our schools and grounds need to be a priority. With the budget cuts, we lost a lot of support for our students and staff. Increased communications are needed. Budget and program updates are needed. She would like to see us replicate what Stowe is doing across the district. She thanked the members of our community for helping our students make the 2024-25 school year successful.

Dr. Calnen is also concerned with the budget and what will happen to our kids with their mental health. We have a challenging year ahead of us. We need to reach our kids at our schools. He believes in school based health, and we also need a mental health system for our students. We need to approach our legislature about the urgency of investing in school based mental health systems.

Mrs. Cushman attended the staff convocation where we welcomed back our returning and new staff. Both our Teacher of the Year Sherrie Winans and Support Staff of the Year Jonathan LeBlanc gave moving speeches. There is opportunity for growth and learning. As Mrs. Winans said, life is a cup, and we get to choose how we fill it.

Mrs. LeBlanc responded to Ms. Lange about her handouts and feels data will be extremely important this year. We need more of a partnership with Social Services. Both Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree have been working on this. She addressed Ms. Griffin about her concerns at the high school. We now have study halls so our students will not have the extra help like they were used to. She also address traffic concerns. We also have students and parents that will drive past our buses when they are stopped with their lights flashing. This is about safety. Something needs to be done.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about the Joint Insurance meeting and reviewing the types of withdrawals from the claim fund balance. She would also like to receive class matrices to show how large our classes are. Mr. Longey stated we are still registering students. We will get you numbers next week and depending on these numbers, he might need to discuss class sizes with the Board.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about bussing shortages. Mr. Longey stated Smyth bus is managing but they are still looking for bus drivers.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about AP classes and if any were cut. Ms. Middleton stated none were cut but if enrollment numbers are low, we may need to cut. Everything is still being offered.

Mrs. LeBlanc understands that we need paras. How are we set with Behavior Techs? Mr. Longey stated we are good.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked if students could take an extra elective instead of a study hall. Mr. Longey stated they could if there is room in a class.

Mrs. LeBlanc spoke about having a good baseline this year with all the cuts that were made. Seeing last year scores will show us if progress was made. We will see a change next year with scores.

Mr. Longey stated our scores were embargoed, but what we were doing was working. Scores were going up. We are above the State level in some areas. He is not sure what next year will bring us. Board members need to understand the support we received using Covid funds

helped our students immensely. That is why we are seeing movement. We will need to wait until next year to see what happens.

Mrs. LeBlanc added losing the Career Center at the high school will have a real impact. Student dropout rates are something she would like to see numbers on.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated it is time to rebuild. We have been living in survival mode. She congratulated Dr. Berrios and looks forward to seeing you in the Human Resources Director position. We have placed a lot of pressure on our staff, and we all need to support our staff. Education needs to be valued. Our teachers and staff can change a student's life. They support our students throughout the year. She will be there supporting our teachers and staff. We are EPS and let's get to work.

Mr. Jonaitis agrees with Mrs. LeBlanc that teaching is a passion. He also welcomed our teachers and students back. He wished them all a great year. He also congratulated Dr. Berrios with your new position. You will be missed at JFK for your leadership and helping hand.

Mr. Jonaitis addressed audience comments about a street next to Enfield High that is closed to traffic and that should be opened in the morning and afternoon to ease the traffic congestion on Enfield Street. Insinuating that there is bias and racial overtones in our schools is insulting. A lot of arrests are not being reported. Crime is up everywhere. As far as arrests at JFK being more than other larger communities, we are protecting our kids and staff. You can't tell me that it is safer to go to school in Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford or Waterbury. We are doing what we need to do for the safety of our kids and staff.

Chairwoman Riley added at our Joint Security meetings we discuss safety, and this is something we will never give up on. Route 5 is a State Road, and they are responsible for the speed limit. It is an election year, so hopefully something can happen with a little pressure from us to have proper speed zones posted. We will keep trying. Hopefully in January when the SSO's are fully staffed, they can have one of them assist with the traffic control.

Chairwoman Riley is looking forward to seeing our data results on how our students are doing. We have discussed this during our leadership meetings to have further discussion with our 4 directors to see how things are progressing along with input from our principals. Also with Mr. Moccio's fact based and data driven leadership, we will have a good baseline and will completely justify our needs for our next budget and pinpoint exactly how our money will be spent in the most efficient ways possible. She looks forward to working with Mr. Moccio. We held a meet & greet for him that was well attended. She also has great conversations with community members and thanked them for their comments and ideas.

Chairwoman Riley congratulated Dr. Berrios. He will be missed at JFK. He did a great job there and as a parent she felt he had complete control of the building. Our wheels are in motion for filling the open principal position. Stay tuned for updates on this process.

Chairwoman Riley hopes that community members were able to view the joint August 12th TC/BOE budget meeting and the RFP process for the audit. This can be viewed anytime on YouTube.

Chairwoman Riley also welcomed back all students, parents and staff for the 2024-25 school year. She offered words of encouragement and reassurance. She also attended the staff convocation which was quite exciting to see all our staff in one place. Our Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year spoke to our staff along with Mr. Longey and Mr. Moccio to rally our staff and get them ready for the 2024-25 school year. She was quite impressed with the amount of staff that have been teaching here for 10-29 years and over 30 years for us. Thank you for your dedication. With all the changes, you could have easily left our district over the summer, but you all chose to stay here and teach. Our staff members have really stepped up.

We have a great team that wants to be here for our kids. She asked for your patience, support and respect.

Chairwoman Riley also commented about the Teacher of the Year message and how she has mentored college interns at her place of employment during the summer. A lot of these interns have been hired. This year, a lot of red flags were raised with how unprepared these interns were for the corporate world. At the convocation, it was mentioned that we need to teach our students skills and tools to use for the future. We need to teach them to be active learners and critical thinkers. If we don't they will be passed over for future jobs just like some of the interns she and her colleagues mentored. Using our vision of a graduate plan will prepare our students for the future. She challenges our staff to grow in your roles and challenge yourselves. Teach our students the skill sets they need to solve problems and to interact professionally with staff and peers.

Chairwoman Riley added our principals will include in their newsletters how parents can assist or volunteer at your child's school. Please fill out the free-reduced lunch application. The guidelines have changed slightly. She does not want to see anyone miss out on an opportunity for assistance. She also urged parents to sign up for Parent Square. She did it last week for her children and it was very easy. Parents also need to update information in PowerSchool for each child. She thanked Dr. Wiley and her team for all everything they do for our students.

Chairwoman Riley stated we are here for the kids. You are all special and unique. Say hello to someone new that you do not know. We are all part of Enfield Public Schools. She wished our students the best this school year.

Mr. Jonaitis left at 7:13 PM.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

11. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Acree reported Curriculum Committee will meet next on September 19th.

Finance Committee: Mrs. Acree reported the Finance Committee meeting schedules for September 3rd has been moved to September 23rd. We held a joint meeting with the Town on August 12th where Mr. Longey provided them with an update on our finances.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Cushman reported the Policy Committee will meet next on September 17th.

Leadership – Chairwoman Riley reported Board Leadership met last week and we will meet again within the next couple of weeks.

13. LIAISON REPORTS

Joint Facility – Chairwoman Riley reported the Joint Facilities Committee will meet on August 29th at 6 PM. Mr. Ryder added that John Dague will be our special guest, and he will discuss our School Modernization plan.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder reported there is nothing new to report.

Joint Security Committee – Chairwoman Riley reported the Joint Security Committee will meet on September 13th.

Enfield Mental Health Committee – Mrs. Acree reported the Enfield Mental Health Committee held a dinner on July 25th with pediatricians. The dinner was sponsored by KITE and Enfield

Head Start. Mr. Longey spoke about the dimensions of mental health challenges in our school and district. The intent of this dinner was to open up ongoing communications with the medical community and school districts to confront childhood mental health crises as a team. Available resources in our town were shared. This early intervention will have a positive short term and long term impact on mental health status of our students. We will schedule our next meeting that will be held in September.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mrs. LeBlanc reported the Enfield Cultural Arts Commission will meet on September 3rd.

School Reports/Updates:

Dr. Calnen reported that the KITE, Enfield Public Schools and the Family Resource Center kindergarten camp was a huge success. Kite will hold their next meeting on September 4th at 5:30 PM. KITE welcomes all students back.

14. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Special Meeting Minutes of June 20, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 6-0-1** passed with Mrs. Acree abstaining.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 25, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Special Meeting Minutes of July 2, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Special Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Special Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

15. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

16. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Mr. Ryder distributed invitation to the ETC (Enfield Together Coalition) Mental Health and Wellness Coalition kickoff meeting on September 27th.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett to adjourn the Regular Meeting of August 27, 2024.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Scott Ryder
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary