

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on September 10, 2024.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Chairwoman Riley.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Charlotte Riley
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Charlotte Riley
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 & Peter Jonaitis

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

Jack-O-Lantern Festival – Co-Jack-O-Lantern Festival Directors Kelsey McGuire-Bruce and Danielle Reel spoke about this year's festival that will be held on Saturday, October 19th from 4-8 pm on the Enfield Town Green. This year they have a rain date planned for Sunday, October 20th. They are actively looking for sponsors and volunteers. Information about the event can be found on their Facebook page EnfieldJOLF or by e-mailing them at enfieldjolf@gmail.com.

Mrs. Pickett thanked them for keeping this Enfield tradition going. She asked about purchasing pumpkins. Mrs. McGuire-Bruce stated they were not able to secure this option.

Chairwoman Riley will not be able to attend but looks forward to seeing the phenomenal pictures from this event. Thank you for all of your hard work.

LEAP Presentation – Mr. Dague and Mrs. Middleton provided the Board with a presentation about LEAP (Learner Engagement & Attendance Program). They reviewed the overview, grant, criteria for selections of LEAP districts, chronic absence percent by district and year, key points, stages, goals, Enfield's structure, and implementation.

Mrs. Acree asked if there is a backup plan for family resistance. Mr. Dague explained we will have 3 tiers of support.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about the amount of funding allocated to Enfield. Mr. Dague stated we will receive \$150K, which is a generous amount. Mrs. LeBlanc added attendance is definitely an issue. Additional resources are definitely needed, and this is a great way to connect with families that might not have the necessary resources to make needed connections. This is something that Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree could benefit from with their committee.

Dr. Calnen asked about LEAP's track record. Mr. Dague stated a study was conducted after

the first cohort and seeing familiar faces has proven to work based on the model with time and the number of visits made increases student attendance. We have asked current staff at all levels to participate. Students feel comfortable with familiar staff and making connections.

Dr. Calnen asked about the types of interventions. Mr. Dague stated they will listen to the needs of the family. They are there to advise and break any language barriers. Staff will report if interventions are needed. They can also point the family towards different resources at the school. They are not there as a social worker. They are there to listen and advise.

Dr. Calnen asked about the criteria for this program. Mr. Dague explained the criteria for the program and for chronically absent students. We will have a school attendance committee that will evaluate absences.

Dr. Calnen asked if this will stretch our staff resources even more. Mr. Dague stated this program will be after school day is done. Staff will receive financial compensation.

Mrs. Pickett is happy to hear about the tiered supports and the data that will be collected. She would like to hear updates about this data. This model makes a lot of sense using staff members and connecting them to our families. This is a grant and how long will this program last and is this something we could sustain in the future? We will have 18 months of practice with this program. We can use this information with our internal practices. There is no way we could financially continue this program without additional funding.

Mrs. Pickett added these visits are tiered interventions and not all families will understand the purpose of the visits. Mr. Dague stated that both he and Ms. Middleton have received the training. We will discuss communication about this program on September 26th with our principals.

Mr. Ryder commented about our chronic absenteeism numbers and the number of home visits. Mr. Dague stated some of the visits will be going back to the same family two or three times. We will also have a number of families that will not want to participate in this program.

Chairwoman Riley added putting information on the website about this program is a good idea. Ms. Middleton added during our training, we looked at different kinds of scenarios for calling families. We introduce ourselves and make a connection first. Then you see if they need anything. We try to make them feel comfortable before someone knocks on their door. This is a mindset shift about how we look at these absences. We will work as a team and will ask permission to bring another person to the home visit. You call before the visit as a reminder and a follow-up call after the visit. You are building connections.

Chairwoman Riley asked about the training that is received. Ms. Middleton stated the training is done online. Mr. Dague added the training session is for 2 hours. They will also conduct mock phone calls as part of the training session.

Chairwoman Riley asked about the 37 applicants and how many positions do you need to fill. Mr. Dague stated we listed 40 staff members in the grant application, so we are very close to our goal. We will need staff at all K-12 levels including Eagle Academy.

Chairwoman Riley asked about payment for the staff participating in this program. Mr. Dague stated staff will be paid each month. They will check in with the coordinators. They will be paid via our payroll system per each hour they work. We will draw down the amount of the grant each month. We will review our data after a cycle or couple of months and will make adjustments as needed.

Chairwoman Riley is very excited about this program she is also hopeful that based on the success of the program, the State will continue to fund this program.

Eli Whitney Roof – Mr. Dague updated the Board about the Eli Whitney roof project. The State needs the Board to vote on the Eli Whitney Roof Replacement Project as complete.

MOTION TO MOVE AN ITEM ON THE AGENDA:

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Enfield Board of Education suspends the rules to move Item 11a. up on the agenda as part of Item 6c.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

11.a. REAPPROVE THE ELI WHITNEY STATE PROJECT #049-0143RR ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT AS COMPLETE

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education reapproves the Eli Whitney State Project #049-0143RR Roof Replacement Project as Complete.

Discussion:

Mrs. Pickett asked if this would impact our school modernization plans. Mr. Dague stated this should not change anything as long as the school remains as a school.

Chairwoman Riley stated that she has the new legislation that Mr. Dague gave her if any Board member would like to see it she can e-mail to you.

A vote by **roll-call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Upcoming Open House Events** – as presented
- b. JFK Principal/Parent Focus Group** – as presented
- c. EPS Update** –

Mr. Longey provided an update about our great opening of school and positive attitudes from our resilient staff. Our students are ready to learn and happy for the new school year to start.

Mr. Longey spoke about athletics and transportation. Smyth bus is still dealing with driver shortages just like other districts. There is also a shortage with referring officials for athletic contests. All Athletic Directors are working with this ongoing issue, and they are being as creative as possible.

Mr. Longey congratulated Human Resources Manager Maureen Jewell for her dedication to Enfield Public Schools. She worked for us for 35 years. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

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 stated the LEAP program will help our students. She spoke about an e-mail she sent to the Board. You need to know your role as Board members and be appropriate. She is interested with the new SRO program and tracking trends. Another school shooting occurred and the next day, lock down drills were held in Enfield. She feels this should have not been done. Kids were told it would be a drill. A lot of our kids have experienced trauma and more training is needed.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked Mrs. Griffin for her comments. Hearing about another school shooting and what went on in the classroom is very upsetting. This is affecting our students with anxieties. Our kids are afraid to come to schools.

Mrs. LeBlanc added September is national suicide prevention month. Listen without judgement and check in on each other.

Mrs. LeBlanc requested via the Chair to the Superintendent for the Board to receive class matrices by class size for the K-5 schools with our current budget cuts. She would also like one from the end of 2024 to compare the class sizes.

Mrs. LeBlanc also requested via the Chair to the Superintendent to receive an update with the coverage at JFK and EHS.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked Mr. Longey for the information about Smyth Bus. Our kids are losing out and this is upsetting. The Town Council will vote on field use for non-profit groups. They will raise the fees for rental use which will then be passed on to the players and parents. The middle class families are getting the short end of the stick. Please look out for this.

Mrs. LeBlanc extended her sympathy to the students and staff at Apalachee high school. She also thanked Lori Gates for distributing 929 cards of thanks to our Enfield first responders. She also thanked EPS students for making these cards.

Dr. Calnen reviewed the racial justice materials we received at our last meeting and the arrest data rates are troubling. Disproportional arrests are being made. School arrests increased after armed police presence are in school buildings. When we collect data, we need to ask more questions. Vigilance is needed and a better job of collecting relevant data. We also need to be aware of discrimination.

Mrs. Acree welcomed back students and staff to the 2024-25 school year. We need to remember to stay positive while dealing with challenges. Our teachers will always do their best with the resources they have for our students. She is looking forward to hearing about our student successes and listening to their beautiful voices.

Mrs. Pickett agrees it is a great start to the new school year. Smarter Balanced Assessment scores have been sent out. Grade 4 is a great cohort to follow with data shifts.

Mrs. Pickett asked if the class matrices can include special education students.

Mrs. Pickett is still concerned about our school security model. She would like more data and details as previously mentioned. She would still like to see school zone signage on Route 5.

Mr. Ryder reminded parents and care givers to complete the Parent Square in order to receive school communications. All Enfield PTO pages have been updated. Dates are starting to fill up on the calendars. Safe Grad also has some events for the graduating class of 2025. These events can be all found on enfieldpto.com. JFK meet the principal candidates night also welcomes families of students in grades 3-5 to attend. Next Friday, EHS Eagles will hold their first home football game at night at 6 PM.

Mrs. Cushman asked about the \$275k ARPA and ESSR funds that moved to the approval process. Is there any update about this? Mr. Longey stated it is still sitting in the approval process.

Mrs. Cushman received a response from Mr. Longey regarding class sizes. Mr. Longey provided her with a general response that class sizes vary from 5 to 20 more students per class. It depends on the section, and course demographics. They tried to protect kindergarten class

sizes, other classes size saw an increase of 5 students. Grade 5 classes saw an increase of 10-12 students per class. The high school has larger class sizes with elective classes and very large study halls.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about the Joint Insurance Committee meeting requests are being ignored. The Democratic caucus would like a complete analysis of the accounts 2022, 2023 and 2024 years. We would like the claim balance broken down by BOE and TC employees along with quarterly updates as well as a number of other requests. We are self-insured and need to make sure best practices are being used. A meeting is needed. She will send out another meeting request to TC leadership about this.

Chairwoman Riley agrees with Mrs. LeBlanc, she has sent out several e-mails requesting a meeting be held. She would like Board and Town Council leadership to meet with Mr. Moccio and Dr. Berrios. She has also requested and joint BOE/TC Budget meeting but has heard nothing from them.

Chairwoman Riley thanked Mr. Longey for the class size data. She also heard about buses not being available to take students to Powder Hollow. Our kids do not play soccer at Powder Hollow. That bus was to take them to Lewis Mills. Our bus company is down drivers. We can explore this at an upcoming BOE Leadership meeting about using vans. Some districts will use outside transportation like DATTCO but that has costs associated with this. Using Parent Square is very easy. Is there a way to have all school events to be placed on the calendar for parents to see?

Mr. Longey stated that Dr. Wiley will attend the October 8th Board meeting and will give a presentation on Parent Square. This information can be added to Parent Square.

MOTION TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA:

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education suspends the rules and adds Item 11b. on the agenda to approve the 2024-25 Student Representatives & Alternates.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. REAPPROVE THE ELI WHITNEY STATE PROJECT #049-0143RR ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT AS COMPLETE

This item was previously addressed.

b. APPROVE 2024-25 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES & ALTERNATES

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Enfield Board of Education approves the 2024-25 Student Representatives & Alternates as presented.

Discussion:

Dr. Calnen stated per BOE Policy #9160 Student Representatives are allowed to attend Board and subcommittee meetings. Mrs. Pickett added she would like to see them participate more.

Dr. Calnen added there may be times during subcommittee meetings when issues arise that are sensitive and inviting our students representatives might not be a good idea.

Mr. Longey added this is the Board's policy. All meetings are open to the public.

Chairwoman Riley agrees with Mrs. Pickett about having students attend our subcommittee meetings. Having them comment under committee reports would be great.

Mr. Ryder added when Mr. Moccio and Mr. Longey conduct their training session, they could make the representatives aware of this. Mr. Longey added we will do this at the training session.

A vote by **roll-call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Finance Committee: Mrs. Acree reported the Finance Committee will meet on September 23rd.

Policy Committee: Mrs. Cushman reported the Policy Committee will meet next on September 17th. Mr. Longey added the committee will now meet in Mr. Dague's office – room 215.

Leadership – Chairwoman Riley reported Board Leadership will meet on September 18th.

13. LIAISON REPORTS

Joint Facility – Chairwoman Riley reported the Joint Facilities Committee met on August 29th. Mr. Dague was our special guest. We discussed new legislation pertaining to School Construction Grants, Universal Pre-K, Alcorn Roof reimbursements, the Library Roof project and moving funds from another roof project (Stowe) that was included in the approved Roof Referendum. We voiced our opinions not move funds from the primary roof projects list to a secondary roof project. Their decision to move this funding is based on an assumption that the Stowe roof would be addressed with the school modernization plan. This transfer was not approved by Joint Facilities Committee members. This has been referred to the Town Council to address. We also discussed fields.

Mrs. Pickett asked when the Town Council members will vote on the roof item. Mr. Ryder is not sure. Chairwoman Riley added they have been taking pieces from the different roof projects. This will create a domino effect so by the time you get to the roofs on the primary list that voters approved, we will be short funding.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder reported the JFK Building Committee will meet on September 19th.

Joint Security Committee – Chairwoman Riley reported the Joint Security Committee will meet on September 13th. She has Mrs. Pickett's email and will discuss it at this meeting.

Enfield Mental Health Committee – Mrs. Acree reported they will attend the Enfield Together Coalition Mental Health & Wellness event on September 27th at Asnuntuck. After this event, we will schedule our next Enfield Mental Health Committee meeting to be held in October.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mrs. LeBlanc reported the Enfield Cultural Arts Commission met on September 3rd, but she was unable to attend. She is not sure when they will meet next. The summer concert series has ended.

Chairwoman Riley added newsletters will go out on Parent Square. Mr. Longey will look into

this.

School Reports/Updates:

Dr. Calnen reported that the Parent Leadership Academy is accepting applications. Applications can be found on the KITE website or by contacting Leslie Lawlor. KITE will assist parents that will bring children to voting polls. Please contact Brianna Beckstrand to register for a play pack to keep them engaged while you vote.

Mr. Ryder reported that Eli Whitney will hold a back to school picnic and open house on September 11th. All the Intermediate schools will hold their open house events on September 11th. Eli Whitney will hold their PTO meetings on the third Tuesday of the month in the Library at 5:30 PM.

Mrs. Acree reported that Prudence Crandall welcomed back all students, families and staff. Seeing all the students smiling faces has brought life back into our building. The staff is working hard implementing the new reading curriculum and we look forward to seeing its success. Crandall will also hold their open house on September 11th. Parents are urged to sign up for conferences when you are there. Parents are urged to sign up for Parent Square to receive all school communications. Crandall will be raising money for Breast Cancer Awareness with our districtwide pink out day being held on October 18th. Everyone at Crandall is looking forward to a great year.

Chairwoman Riley reported that Hazardville Memorial will hold their open house on September 18th.

Mr. Ryder read the dates for each school open house dates and times.

14. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Special Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2024, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

15. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

16. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION - None

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc to adjourn the Regular Meeting of September 10, 2024.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Scott Ryder
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary