

Pre-K Through 5 And Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2025

The Pre-K Through 5 and Eagle Academy School Pre-Referendum Building Committee held a meeting on July 30, 2025 at Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Randy Daigle

2. **ROLL CALL**
MEMBERS PRESENT

Randy Daigle, Tina LeBlanc (7:15), Lauren Andrews (6:24), Janet Cushman (7:15), John Dague, through 5 Kate Flanagan, Steve Moccio (7:33), Charlotte Riley (7:15), Scott Ryder (7:15), Chris Cykley, Jeffrey Wyszynski, Antonia Ciaverella, Justin Hopkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

Christine DeBonne, Gina Cekala, Bob Cressotti, Jim Nasuta, Amanda Pickett, Jeff Rousseau

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
Approval of July 2, 2025 Minutes - Tabled

4. **ARCHITECTS PRESENTATION**

Jeff states they prepared a presentation slide deck. We will go over the milestone schedule. Milestone schedule distributed. We have walked through the buildings, started our analysis as far as existing conditions. All of the content tonight is considered draft. We will talk about what we have done, a little about the demographics and where we're headed with that piece. A good portion of the slide deck is a summary of existing conditions. We will spend some time on the site analysis. Antonia started looking at the benchmarking of existing schools when it comes to OGA (Office of Grants Administration) standards. We will maximize reimbursement where we can. There are some rules that we follow to maximize reimbursement. They have space standards, we're measuring core spaces such as media centers, cafeterias and gymnasiums. Those are important when you start thinking about if you're going to add, renovate. Those spaces must be appropriately sized if you're bringing in population. Studying existing conditions first is the important piece. Community engagement, we want to be proactive and prepared. Antonia will go over some of the things we have done in the past. It's going to hit fast in the fall, we'd like to be proactive and hit the ground running. I'd like to jump into summary of activities, we have an active MS Teams website. All existing conditions, programming information, previous presentations, enrollment, we have a lot of information. We visited 2 or 3 buildings a day. Our building systems engineers were with us and we got a pretty good idea of the existing conditions. In progress we are working on the existing use plans. We are trying to understand how the building is being used today with spaces and programs. It is important piece when we start showing the community how you are using every square inch. You've already had teacher forums and conversations about K-5 or preK-5. We have a couple of slides to show you what that would look like. We will show you how that works in a State formula perspective. The items that we need to work on over the next several weeks, communicating with the PAC, making sure we get the appropriate information whether it is boards, surveys, we are happy to help. We will go over the demographics, we looked at Peter Prowda information, he has done enrollment projections in the past. Knowing what is happening in your community, a deeper dive is needed.

Randy states that is a huge statement. If we don't get this future right, every building will be maxed out already. I commend you for thinking that far in advance.

Jeff states we know you've already had the teacher engagement. We need to have a deeper conversation district-wide in regards to special education. We'd like to understand transportation a little better. Food service, we heard about elementary having warming kitchens and the quality. Is there a hybrid we can look at?

Randy states, they start off one direction and in a couple of years they change. It starts as a warming kitchen then it changes.

Chris asks aren't they using the high school as the master kitchen?

Randy states yes.

Jeff states with security and I.T., we need to have conversations. To date we have done a lot and we appreciate the principals and staff. A Working & Milestone Schedule is distributed and reviewed with the committee. Schedule-wise, we identified Wednesday meetings it also shows other meetings such as Town Council and Board of Ed. We found every 3rd week works well for building committee meetings. Historically, we have done 2, 3, 4 community conversations and we can coordinate with the PAC.

Kate state intermediate (gr. 3-5) Open House is September 3rd. The Primary schools is the same week. The first week or two is open house. Another big event is Trunk or Treat in October. That is a big event. Your final piece is the holiday event in December.

Jeff states at Open House we develop a board for the entry with a QR code to the website. We use a little card to take with them. We will coordinate with Randy. The superintendent will have all the dates. The original RFP had an original referendum date of June 2nd.

Randy states that is not set in stone.

Chris states that is the last opportunity to get into the State.

Jeff shows the steps to get a grant.

Randy states we will follow your lead. If there is something you need, tell us and we will make it happen.

Jeff shows the process, stating you submit the grant, they review it. Most communities start knowing they're on the list.

Randy states I stressed to town council and board of ed this isn't a quick fix. This is 7 to 8 years.

Jeff shows a slide of the schools, the original construction date, when there was renovations/additions, grade level, enrollment, GSF. This will change when we verify the square footage. The average is about 65 years old. Next slide shows the town with which schools attend which buildings.

Kate states with Memorial and Whitney with an influx of families coming in.

Randy states with Eagle Academy we have an opportunity to enlarge so we can welcome students from area towns.

Lauren states in Crandall district there are potential apartments being built.

Jeff states we are aware of the 3 projects, the Enfield Market Place, Mass Mutual and the North River Street project. The demographer will look at all the information. MP Planning will identify any planned, approved or recently built housing. They will show what happened in the past and how accurate they were. They prepare for low, medium and high growth scenarios. All grants will be based on highest population count in 8 year window.

Kate asks are you looking for 3 schools?

Jeff states we don't know yet.

Randy states they have to gather all the information. Once they figure out enrollment, then they will make recommendations, such as one new, two new, renovations. You have to remember that these schools can't be occupied during construction. We need to have a swing space. Now we have to figure out how to get this ball rolling. Are we relocating 350 kids or relocating 500 kids?

Jeff states everything is on the table.

Antonia shows slides from data that John shared from meetings that was held with faculty. The teachers and this committee are rallying around the idea of Pre K or K to 5 through the consideration of sister schools coming together in some capacity. We heard there was a deeper dive into the organizational model and how those spaces wanted to be represented. If PreK comes into the focus it could be a separate building or a wing in a K-5 model. Eagle could be a stand alone building but there are notes that say it could be a connection point with some of these new school ideas. This is something we will talk about. Benefits of bringing the pairing of the sister schools into the small learning communities you can start to create a support basis around them. You can better integrate with all of the staff. These environments really want to be fluid, but to build a healthy, safe and beautiful learning environment. Next slide is about the classrooms to be student-centered, age appropriate furniture. Zones within the room and areas with small groups to meet. Support spaces, to create spaces for play labs, STEAM labs, time aside. Other considerations are teacher workrooms where a teacher can take a phone call, a conference room, an assembly area for the families and staff child care. Outdoor connections, age appropriate play, shaded areas, enclosed location, outdoor classroom seating. Technology wireless charging, interactive displays. Other opportunities enhance before/after child care, extended year programming and more clubs and activities, expanded parks and rec. opportunities.

Kate states the court yards are right next to classrooms so they can't be used. They are disruptive to the surrounding classrooms.

Randy states at JFK the outdoor classroom is away from the classrooms.

Jeff states the next slide is existing conditions in the buildings. There are common themes. You have gotten good use out of these buildings. They have been well used and reinvented from their original design. Many of the schools had additions in the early 2000's. SPED is using whatever spaces they can. Slide shows wetlands area of each school.

Stowe: PreK (Headstart, STEAM, Integrated) 272 students, 110 staff, Age 62 years (1963)

Site – Condition of parking areas, no central pick up/drop off area.

Architectural – Shared space with Town/BOE. Push/pull clearances.

Building System – Many at EOUL (End of Useful Life). Window AC units, original vintage systems. There is now a requirement for fresh air exchange which most of the buildings don't have.

Programming – Lack of SPED space, gym/café subdivided and turned into classrooms that are reassembled daily, security vestibule needed. Four classrooms in the gym.

Eagle Academy: Newer building, 12,956 SF, K-12 with 28 students, Building Age 24 years old (2001)

What is appropriate amount for future? Good building, well maintained. This was a HeadStart building and not set up appropriately for what is there.

Site – Lacks age appropriate amenities, Parking is fine, entrance is fine. Challenges over time are sidewalk cracks and deterioration. Improved basketball courts desired, and picnic tables for outdoor learning. There will be a program for roof draining program.

Architectural Exterior – Finished need to be durable, seeing cracking in reinforced drywall, wood doors should be metal.

Programming: Need for outdoor play, lacks specials/vocational program. Provide additional layers to take space/alternative work areas, security vestibule needed. Specialists need more workspace/breakroom. Time aside spaces without seclusion is desired, gather space for family events needed.

Building Systems – Fan rooms provided, units in fair condition, targeted upgrades, program use changed from original use, requires mechanical modifications.

Henry Barnard: K-2, 365 Students, 70-75 Staff, Built in 1968 (57 years old), building size is 60,326 SF

This at one point housed the BOE office so this wing was modified.

Site – Complex pick up/drop off, no separation parents/bus. We hear it backs up to Shaker Road.

Architectural Exterior – Lot of glass blocks in these buildings, they've painted, put roofing nails through, they've put plywood over. Soffits/windows need complete renovations. Poor insulating values, humidity concerns, single pane windows. Some roofs past their useful life, some instances persistent water leaks at windows, doors, roofs accelerated deterioration.

Architectural Interior – Interior finished are EOUL (millwork, floors, ceilings, doors). Few functional adult toilet rooms, carpets need to be removed.

Antonia states we took the gym, cafeteria and media center and looked at what you have existing. We have taken your existing enrollment for the calculation and compared. The gym works for size according to OGA. You have flexibility in the cafeteria and media center which is important when you start thinking about renovating and if more students are coming into the picture. Can these core spaces accommodate that growing enrollment. You will see a consistent theme that the cafeteria and media center have the capacity. The state uses the calculation of 3 lunch waves in the cafeteria.

Prudence Crandall: 3-5, 369 Students, 1966 Construction, 59 years old, 60,419 SF, 2001 Addition of Library and Gym

This is the one with one main entry. Same challenges with soffits, single pane windows.

Site – No dedicated parent/bus area, parents cross bus traffic. Traffic backs up into the street. Parking area is deteriorating and sinking near catchment basin. Soils contributing to aggressing settling issues, slab moisture and ground conditions (puddling, sinking) in play areas/fields.

Architectural Interior - Majority of finished past useful life (millwork, floors, doors, ceilings) moisture issues impacting flooring. No fire protection, starting to see age and conditions. Settlement cracking due to shape of building. No push/pull clearance. Several compliance issues.

Building Systems – Past useful life. Plumbing poor, inconsistent heat. Ventilation and air conditioning needed. Plumbing and sewer persistent needed.

Architectural Exterior – Poor insulating values. Humidity concern, some poorly functioning and/or single pane windows, some roof past their useful life. Evidence of moisture on exterior brick wall, insects/animals accessing soffits.

Randy states he is amazed the talent that these teachers have. They are so focused and dedicated.

Jeff states please treat this as a draft. We walked through the buildings and we are still validating information.

Hazardville Memorial: K-2, 305 Students, 50-60 Staff, 54,316 SF, 71 Years old 1954:

Slide show hallway floor – discoloration is not from maintenance, they were working on either an overlay of the floor or remediation. Not much has been done to the original building.

Site – Needs serious attention. No separated parent/bus, traffic, deteriorating pavement.

Randy states one good thing about this site, you could use the entire courtyard. It could be as much as 8,000 SF.

Jeff states an interesting insight by one of your elementary principals, she stated all of your elementaries are one story, having stairs could be used for gross motor skill development. I thought that was interesting. If we are tight on capacity, most of our PreK-5 buildings are two stories.

Randy states if you don't have the space you can go up.

Architectural – Entire envelope failing, interior finishes EOUL, abatement. Needs a lot of work, windows, roof challenges which led to window challenges. You can see the aging conditions. Areas of exterior wall below windows were wood and wood paneling is used is highly deteriorated, at joints/seals/sills, missing grout and loose corners of brick, rusting at window frames.

Building Systems – All systems at or past end of useful life, plumbing odors persistent. Ventilation and a/c needed. Abundance of glass leads to uncontrolled heat and glare issues in classrooms. Several compliance issues, floor clearances/reach at entranceways, sinks and millwork. A secure entry needed.

Jeff states Barnard, Whitney and Parkman are similar design.

Eli Whitney: 3-5, 359 Students, 65-70 Staff, 58,629 SF, Building Age is 58 years old, Built in 1967

Some similar comments.

Building System – Plumbing issues and odors persistent, humidity, no AC, WiFi access a challenge, electricity capacity. All systems are end of Useful Life (EOUL). One boiler replaced, one wasn't. Well maintained building. Site - Olmstead and Middle roads are the connections. Not a lot of outdoor space for play. Paved areas for playground. Lack of play areas/field space. Play area too small for recess. They are allowed to use town ball field for recess. Parent drop off/pick up backs up onto South Road. Walkers cross to Middle Road. Good separation for bus/parents.

Architectural Exterior – Envelope (roof/windows), interior finishes EOUL. Poor insulating values, humidity concerns, some poorly functioning and/or single pane windows, some roofs have been replaced, but roof at addition leaks. Brick in fair condition.

Architectural Interior – Majority of finishes past useful life (millwork, floors, doors, ceilings), challenges with acoustics at folding partitions (installed gym padding).

Enfield Street School: K-2, 236 Students, 35-40 Staff, 48,349 SF, 72 Years old, built in 1953.

Similar comments.

Site – Buses travel through neighborhood but good separation for bus/parent. Parking surfaces in good condition. Play and blacktop areas in good condition, protected in rear. Location of Admin, eyes on the site, you don't have that in a lot of your buildings.

Architectural Exterior – Poor insulating values, humidity concerns, some poorly functioning and/or single pane windows, some roofs have been replaced but patches in other areas still leak. Underside of soffits show deterioration, rusting of window frames, some evidence of moisture of brick walls. Building envelope needs a lot of attention. Storm water collection and maintenance plan is recommended. Courtyard completely enclosed.

Architectural Interior – Majority of finishes past useful life (millwork, floors, doors, ceilings). Lack of space for SPED and support staff. Not much has been done to this building. Accessibility – several compliance issues, floor clearances/reach at entranceways, sinks and millwork. Secure entry needed.

E.H. Parkman School: 3-5, 287 Students, 61 Years Old Built in 1964, 60,326 SF

Pictures are pretty much interchangeable as far as soffits, and fixing aging conditions. Fire district 1 next door.

Site – A lot of walkers, bikes. Asphalt cracking and generally in poor condition. Parent drop off at gym loop works well but bus circle back up onto Weymouth Road. Tight parking for events. Want age appropriate play and additional blacktop/basketball area. Some of the grade on the outside is higher than the floor on the inside. You start to see deterioration on bottom sills. If these are egress doors, they need to be addressed, maintenance-wise. When you look at buildings and you see a concrete pad outside doors don't heave, asphalt tends to move.

Architectural Interior – Finishes are past useful life (millwork, floors, doors, ceilings) SPED shares spaces, acoustic challenges between learning areas. Some of the lighting may be the original.

Architectural Exterior – Poor insulating values, humidity concerns, some poorly functioning and/or single pane windows, persistent roof leaks, water infiltration in gym floor, underside of soffits show deterioration, rusting, some evidence of moisture at brick walls.

Building Systems – All systems at or past end of useful life, lack of humidity control, air conditioning, kitchen water backup with heavy rain and overflows onto cafeteria floors/hallways.

Jeff states that is a summary. If we can identify common themes, we will put a common theme slide together. Jeff reviews the schedule for members who arrived late from a previous meeting.

Scott asks what is our ask?

Jeff states to inform the public as far as the condition.

Randy states to Scott, you start getting the PAC together. People don't know this is happening. It is more informational now. It is not for feedback, just getting the public aware.

Jeff states we talked about projected enrollment. Slide shown of projected enrollment from a previous study. Most of this work is based on persistently ratios and the cohort survival method. The scope would be for MP Planning to go meet with planning and zoning. Slide shown of historical births and enrollment, hotspots for home sales, and low, medium and high projections. Any of this can be used for grant applications. Basically, it's all math, the size of the building is based on the highest enrollment in the 8 year window, times allowable square footage.

Randy states what you don't want to do is based on this data, have assigned occupancy to one school, then all of a sudden another unit is built, say 400 apartments, and we have another 100 kids moving in, and now we have to redistrict. All this information is trying to help us not to redistrict. These numbers are very crucial.

Steve states we have already contracted with Dr. Prowda to do enrollment projections and he wanted to know about the building projects. I provided him with the number of apartments, the number that are projected to be one, two or three bedrooms. He's not slated to get to our until October.

Randy states this is not a 3 or 4 year project, it's 8 to 10 years.

Jeff shows slide of re-establishing PK/K-5 schools. Barnard and Crandall, if combined, using existing enrollment is 734 K-5 students. Enfield Street and Parkman 523 students, Memorial and Eli Whitney 664 students. We then took the current enrollment at H.B. Stowe Preschool (272) and divided by 3, we basically put 90 PreK in the combined elementary. Schools. Do we add PreK to elementary schools or leave them alone? You can see the difference. This is not considering new builds.

Lauren states parents who children go to Barnard and Crandall that I've talked to, are terrified of a building that size. When I talk to parents they all love the idea of K-5 or PreK-5 but the idea of having an elementary school at 750 or higher terrifies them. People compare it to JFK. They don't like that high of a number.

Scott states we are putting too many people in a 70 year old building, but what these buildings are going to do is have the parking and the space.

Randy states it is everything we have to consider.

Jeff states it is a good comment, there are strategies to talk about it. We can look at other options. I completely understand.

Charlotte states some of those students could end up at Eagle Academy.

Randy states this is an overview of population, a benchmark to get an idea of number of kids if we are combining. These are questions we need to hear. We need to do it right and educate the public. New schools are a lot different. We don't know a floor plan yet, we need to educate and show them. We have to do our job to educate the public. A 40,000 SF building is different than a 80,000 SF building.

Jeff states there are configurations to separate the students, a two story building is one way to make a school community feel smaller.

Lauren states it was the way it was presented previously and the way people talk about it. We've used the terminology merge the sister schools.

Randy states we have to do it right. We have to do this right, there is no alternative.

Jeff states you'll hear us talk about small learning communities, grade configurations to separate lower elementary with upper elementary. We may talk about a two story school it lends itself to the operations and make these schools feel intimate.

Lauren states there are two groups of people, people who need to be swayed on the money, and a group of people fine spending the money but not creating 3 mini middle schools.

Tina states Crandall is almost 200 more kids. I was looking at the map of how they redistrict and the reason why they redistricted like that was because Alcorn was sited for racial inequity. They decided at the time was close 2 schools, Stowe and Alcorn. The way they redistricted was to correct a site from the State. The idea was at the time we wouldn't have such disparity. If we were to go to 3 schools, you have to redistrict. They took the center of Thompsonville and broke it into 3 sections.

Jeff states we're not going to get it right the first time. The whole purpose of the development of options is typically the best option is through the conversations and a little bit of this and a little bit of that. These next two slides show you how we are going to get to the options. We will start with population, then grade level configurations, then size of building, then cost. If there are other properties in the community, it's helpful to see what a school of a certain size with this many students is going to look like on the site. You will hear the term allowable area all the time. It is highest enrollment times an allowable area. You plug in the grade level configuration, there's a certain square footage per student depending on the size of the school. A 110,000 SF building is twice the size of Hazardville. We have done a lot of projects that are PreK-5 over the last decade. Most are in the 700-800 student range, most are two story. Our intent is to develop some options. Show you the sites, show you graphically what it could look like. We will address the small learning communities and what they look like.

Kate asks if there is an option to have the programs housed in one school be in each of the schools so the students can go to their home schools?

Steve states that is something we wanted to do. That is something we started to do this year.

Jeff states the question is the Pre-K. It becomes your safety valve for fluctuations in enrollment. We heard a lot about K-5. We were looking at maybe three K-5 and a Pre-K, no redistricting. Three K-5 and a PreK equalizing enrollment. Then looking at PreK-5 leaving the catchment areas alone. Then a PreK-5 with redistricting. Then maybe looking at one location for a Pre-K maybe at the smallest school, then the others being K-5. Should we be looking at a Pre-K through K?

Randy states the concern I have is having one Pre-K, is the time it's going to take the bus to go from one side of town to the other. Having one, you're looking at some students on the bus for 45 minutes. I wouldn't be opposed to four, to break it up, three might be too tight. With four Pre-K through 5, we could have room for growth and expansion. If we have 3, I'm afraid we're locked in.

Lauren states we need to keep the Pre-K the Stowe type model. People love it. But the bonus to be in your home school is great. People want to see that we have a long term plan.

Randy ask do people want to have a separate Pre-K school or to be in the schools with other students?

Lauren states for those of us who had children go to Stowe, it's wonderful. The way we have them split now and how the staff and parents talk about all the transitions, if we could show Pre-K in their home schools, we could get people on board.

Tina asks how does it impact HeadStart?

Steve states we need Jaclyn Valley at this table.

Scott states we need to expand Eagle Academy.

Randy states we talked about that.

Jeff states one thing that move the needle is the legislation related to the additional 15% on Pre-K. If you're getting 15% on the entire building that has Pre-K in it, I'd say that's the way to go. I think we have enough options to keep moving. The 2026 reimbursement rate, Enfield's went down by 3.2%. The other piece if we're going to talk about renovate as new, if we're going to look at a building and double in size, the rules say when you're done 55% of the footprint needs to be the existing footprint of the building. For the numbers we're looking at, I'm not sure we're going to get there.

Scott asks does that reflect the fact that we're an alliance district? One of the things they told us is that we would qualify for extras because we're an alliance district.

Jeff states they take all kinds of socio-economics impacts in factors. It would be great to know who you had that dialog with. I will look into it.

Randy states renovate as new is a higher reimbursement rate, it restricts programs and construction. Timing is different, too. Bottom line numbers don't explain the total cost.

Tina asks if we build new, we will be using existing sites? Part of getting the referendum passed is we have so many empty buildings.

Randy states yes. Technically, you have to have a building of certain square feet based on enrollment. It doesn't mean footprint, it can be 2 story. We don't want any empty buildings and that was said early on. The only reason we look at other properties is we need swing space. We can't renovate with students in the buildings. Could we consider shortening the school day to get the students out of the building, that's just a thought. If we can get the swing space built, then move children out and then start renovating that building. It's hard to design a swing space based on all the programs and the State is only going to pay us once. We have to be open and honest with the public. If we say we're going to build a new building, we have to acquire the land, we have to do geo-tech services on it, we have to do environmental on it, we have to make sure it's suitable for building on. Saying we're going to build a new building answers one question but opens up many others.

Chris states whatever buildings people are referencing in town, as part of this we could quickly study them and shoot that notion down.

Tina states people are still on that Fermi should've been the middle school.

Charlotte asks if demolition cost are reimbursable?

Jeff states yes.

Tina states the diversity in our town has grown since the 2011 redistricting. It will be interesting to see a redistricting model and how that will go. That is important to note.

Charlotte asks do we have to hire someone to assess the demographics in the town based on where they live?

Steve states we have all the information.

Jeff states MP Planning will be looking at the demographics for diversity.

Randy states the **next meeting will be August 13th in the Scitico Room.**

Antonia states we are thinking about open houses, if there are things we want to share, we can get the graphics together for those events. We can do an activity book, it is a way to get the students involved. How many would you need printed?

Jeff states we can summarize conditions, show a schedule and why we're doing the project. I'd like you to start thinking about what night would you like to have Community Conversations? Also, have a board in each of the schools with dates of the community conversations. We can attend PTO meetings.

Randy states we'd like to present to the Senior Center, also.

Steve states October 15th is KITE annual meeting.

Jeff states there is a benefit to get the public out to see the existing conditions. The homework for you is, where, when and name of event. We need the dates of the schools Trunk or Treat.

5. COMMENTS

- a. Committee Member Comments**
- b. Liaison Member Comments**
- c. Good to the Order**

6. Motion to Adjourn

Motion made by Charlotte Riley

Seconded by Tina LeBlanc

Motion passes by a show of hands

NEXT MEETING IS AUGUST 13, 2025, ENFIELD TOWN HALL SCITICO ROOM

Adjourned at 8:45 PM

Submitted by Ellen Smith