

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 22, 2013**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in the Enfield Room, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on January 22, 2013.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Chairman Neville.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Thomas J. Sirard
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Thomas J. Sirard
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Neville announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Jonaitis, Tina LeBlanc, Kevin Fealy, Vin Grady, Donna Szewczak, Joyce Hall, Tom Sirard, Jen Rancourt and Timothy Neville

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dr. Jeffrey Schumann, Superintendent and Mr. Christopher Drezek, Deputy Superintendent

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)** – None

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

- a. Transition to Kindergarten Program – as presented
- b. Special BOE Meeting Locations – as presented
- c. Grants Update – as presented
- d. Personnel Report – as presented

8. **AUDIENCES:**

Elizabeth Davis, North Maple Street – Mrs. Davis supports the budget the superintendent has presented to the Board of Education. Full day Kindergarten is important. Education is one of the most important things. Our children are the future of our country. She encourages the Board to support the budget and vote to implement full day Kindergarten. We need to stand behind our children's education. Thank you. Chairman Neville thanked Mrs. Davis for her comments.

Karen Weseliza, KITE Chair (Renee Lane) and Chris Gomeau, KITE Coordinator (Winterway) – Mrs. Weseliza stated we are here tonight to present to the Board the KITE Community Plan. Ten years ago we had started a plan with the William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund to become a discovery community. Over the past ten years, we have conducted research in the Enfield Community through parent meetings, focus groups, community conversations, etc. We are now at the point of implementing our plan. In order to implement this plan fully, full day Kindergarten is needed. KITE is offering our resources to the Board and Town Council. We are available to assist you to make an informed decision regarding full day Kindergarten. Please include us in your discussions and we are here to answer any questions.

Mrs. Gomeau stated the William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund supports early education and care in Enfield for many years. Some of you have already seen our early education comprehensive plan. When we put this plan together, we included many members of our community. Our three main focuses are health, early care, education and family engagement. Over seventeen hundred volunteer

hours were put into this plan by members of this community. Several focus groups were held. The primary topic at all meetings was for full day Kindergarten. This is one of the strategies in our community plan. Please let us know if there are any other questions we can answer. Chairman Neville thanked both Mrs. Weseliza and Mrs. Gomeau for everything they have done. He encourages everyone to attend their meetings.

Mrs. Weseliza added the key to success in high school is to start our children with a truly good foundation when they are young. We need to start this when children are young or it will not matter how beautiful our high school building is. They need our support now.

**Jodie Claire, Colonial Drive** – Mrs. Claire is a concerned parent whose child will start Kindergarten in the fall. Many families have moved out of our neighborhood because of our school system. They have chosen to stay in Enfield. Her child attends preschool. Skills are gained with the additional time students receive in full day Kindergarten. She has been a full day Kindergarten teacher in the Manchester Public Schools for 10 years. Students come to us with a wide range of experiences. Full day Kindergarten provides them with extra support. Students need to leave Kindergarten feeling successful. She encourages Board members to support full day Kindergarten. Chairman Neville thanked her.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None**

**10. NEW BUSINESS:**

**a. Discussion with Senator John Kissel, Representative David Kiner and Representative David Alexander:**

Dr. Schumann stated tonight Senator Kissel, Representative Kiner and Representative Alexander are present to answer questions from Board members.

Chairman Neville thanked former Board member Chuck Johnson for starting this process. He welcomed Senator Kissel, Representative Kiner and Representative Alexander to the Board meeting. Ms. Hall has compiled most of the questions from the Board that were sent to you. We would like to know the committees that you are currently serving on and any comments you would like to make. Then Board members may ask you some questions.

Senator Kissel thanked the Board and Dr. Schumann for this invitation. He appreciated the kind messages he received after the elections. This is his 11<sup>th</sup> term in the legislature. He is the ranking chair of the Judiciary Committee, Co-Chair of the Program Review and Investigations Committee, a regular member of the Law Committee and Legislative Management Committee. He was asked to serve on the Super Committee to address the horrific tragedy that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown. He will be a member of a subcommittee looking at gun violence, mental health issues and school safety. The agendas for this subcommittee are very aggressive. The ultimate goal is to reach a consensus on a number of issues. This will not be easy. We are trying to have a common ground established by the end of February. Our regular committee work will continue at the same time this Super Committee work is going on.

Senator Kissel stated we are facing a billion dollar deficit for the next two upcoming fiscal years. Governor Malloy will give his budget address in February. He will set the tone and will let us know what his goals are. We will then respond to what has been presented.

Senator Kissel stated full day Kindergarten is an important topic and will be driven by money. He understands early education is important. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done with education reform and teacher evaluation. We will represent Enfield well as a bipartisan effort.

Representative Alexander thanked the Board for inviting us here tonight. He thanked Mr. Johnson and stated it is important to keep the lines of communication open. This is his first term as a freshman representative from the 58<sup>th</sup> District. He is currently moving into his office and learning

about the issues and getting involved. He has been appointed to the Veteran's Committee, Transportation Committee and the Public Health Committee. He has submitted some bills already for the Veteran's Committee, is excited to be working on the Governor's light rail proposal that will connect lines between Springfield and New Haven.

Representative Alexander stated full day Kindergarten is important. We want to attract young families to Enfield. He went to full day Kindergarten where they picked up on a learning issue he had. There are many benefits to full day Kindergarten. We will be a good team working on issues for Enfield. We may disagree at times but will work as a team for Enfield.

Representative Kiner stated he represents the 59<sup>th</sup> District and this is his second term. We are just getting started and are here to listen to you. We can come back again. He is the Vice Chair of the Journal Law Committee, a member of the Appropriations Committee and a member of the Subcommittee Labor and Public Employees Committee, and a member on the Education Committee.

Representative Kiner stated one of our top priorities will be school safety. Once we have some proposals from this committee he would like to attend one of your executive session safety meetings or meet with Dr. Schumann to discuss school safety to get your input. One of the laws is to hold drills every three months which he believes schools are currently conducting.

Representative Kiner stated he supports full day Kindergarten. He knows there will be costs associated with this and he will try to bring back as much funding to the Board and the Town.

Ms. Hall stated one of the questions you received was changing the entrance age for kindergarteners. Senator Beth Bye objected this change during the last session. Ms. Hall would like to see this addressed again this session. She would prefer to see the age for students entering Kindergarten be 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The legislation proposed the age to turn 5 by October 1<sup>st</sup> last year. There is great advantage to keeping the age range closer instead of having children range from 4 to 6 years old.

Representative Kiner asked if there was a consensus of the Board regarding this. Chairman Neville agrees with Ms. Hall.

Mrs. LeBlanc also agrees. She held a child back due to an October birthday. She likes the September 1<sup>st</sup> instead of October 1<sup>st</sup> date. She does not regret this decision. Many parents struggle with this kind of decision.

Ms. Hall added there are a lot of audience members that are also supporting this entrance age change.

Senator Kissel stated 35 states have a cutoff where children entering Kindergarten must turn the age of 5 between August 1<sup>st</sup> and October 16<sup>th</sup>. There are only 4 states like us. His son was also in the same situation and we struggled with this decision to keep him back. Keeping him back has not hurt him at all. He is not sure why Senator Bye did not support this change.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated they had their son join a book club during that year. This is something she would like to see more preschools implement.

Senator Kissel stated to make this change it would cost the state \$5 million dollars to implement.

Chairman Neville asked if there is a consensus from the Board regarding this. Board members agreed with the entrance age change for Kindergarteners. Chairman Neville stated his children all attended full day Kindergarten.

Representative Kiner believes fewer children would be held back and questioned the \$5 million dollar amount. Senator Kissel stated they would be in a special program longer costing more money. The proposal to change the date would actually cost the Towns less money.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about ECS funding we will or won't be receiving, unfunded mandates that towns are hit with and the cost to implement security changes.

Representative Kiner asked if we can supply them with a list of reasonable unfunded mandates.

Ms. Hall stated she has submitted three lists of unfunded mandates plus the questions. Some of the unfunded mandates are State Common Core, Teacher Evaluation System, and High School Reform. We needed to redo our entire curriculum over that was labor intensive with no additional funding for the State Common Core. She understands there is a bill before the Education Committee that may delay the implementation for the Teacher Evaluation System and this will also be labor intensive with no additional funding. High School Reform has been hanging over our heads for several years and this will also be another unfunded mandate.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we did come up with a list for you.

Chairman Neville stated we will direct the Superintendent to look into this.

Representative Alexander stated unfunded mandates started with No Child Left Behind. This is a significant problem. There are Federal requirements that were sent to the State level that were then sent to the municipal level with no funding. This needs to change. He will be very leery with anything that has to do education reform with unfunded mandates. The municipalities are all being squeezed. He attended a ConnCAN meeting today where they discussed the evaluation system and potential ideas.

Mr. Jonaitis asked them to not vote for anything regardless of your party affiliation that has an unfunded mandate attached to it.

Senator Kissel stated he voted against for the Race to the Top. Some people were very critical about this Federal Stimulus funding. This would have been a huge burden on many municipalities. We have stopped using the ECS funding formula since 2010-11 and appropriations were reduced by 14%. At that time, we were able to use Federal funds that were scheduled to be used towards stimulus and it saved us 14% of what we were spending. When the Federal Stimulus Funding dried up, legislators and Governor Malloy kicked in another \$50 million dollars to level fund. We have stopped using the ECS formula and now it is a straight-up grant. He does not see this straight-up grant changing in a positive direction.

Senator Kissel agrees with both Representative Kiner and Representative Alexander that we will be a great team for Enfield. We are your Enfield Delegation and we feel strongly about representing you. We will disagree on some items but that is ok. Since this recession he is not sure how things will be held on the education side or the town side. He has always said to the Mayor and Board Chairman it will impact each town the same way. We will need to hear what the Governor addresses and what our options will be. He does not want to see extreme cuts because they will be felt all the way down to the taxpayers. If we were to fully support the ECS grant, we would need to come up with around \$724 million dollars. He does not see this changing anytime soon. The three of us will fight for as many dollars as we can for the Town of Enfield and North Central Connecticut.

Ms. Hall asked if that amount is for the Excess Cost Grants or for the Education Cost Sharing. The information he has is for the Education Cost Sharing. He will send this information to Board members.

Mrs. Szewczak asked about Connecticut being a right to work state.

Representative Kiner stated he works on the Labor Committee and he does not believe the support is there for a public hearing to make Connecticut a right to work state. The votes are not there to raise taxes either. Education costs are around a quarter of our State's budget. We can debate this topic all night long. We are an expensive state to live in. At first glance, he will not support this.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we want businesses to stay in Connecticut and conduct business here. Representative Kiner stated we should start with the best education first.

Mrs. Szewczak asked about raising the cap for the state projects and prevailing wages. Representative Kiner stated this would also be addressed by the Labor Committee. We would need to have a public hearing on this during this session.

Mrs. Szewczak stated the State is building all of these new magnet schools and the private sector does not spend as much money on our buildings that are just as good. We go out to bid so labor is cheaper. Representative Kiner will let Mrs. Szewczak know when that bill is going to be addressed.

Ms. Hall added there are a number of bills that are dealing with this. Mrs. Szewczak stated when you are building a school everyone will ask you how much each square foot will cost. The costs are staggering.

Mr. Sirard stated he builds buildings for a living and it is an expensive proposition. Every program or plan that is put in place will cost us money just like the anti bullying legislation. A lot of man hours went into this without any funding. The Connecticut Association of Municipalities stated the State shortchanged Enfield \$20 million in ECS funding. We are talking about putting full day Kindergarten in our schools and you are looking at a shortfall from the State. It is hard to turn around and raise property taxes. There is a law suit in place suing the State about using the funding.

Mr. Sirard stated we are proposing to add vice principals to the elementary schools due to SEED and we will need to foot the bill for it.

Mr. Sirard agrees with Mr. Jonaitis and understands budgetary concerns. If it is going to cost us money, don't vote for it. If you cannot fully fund the mandate, please cut us some slack and allow us to implement and fund what we can. The people in Enfield know how to run a school system.

Ms. Hall asked about the proposed chart of accounts to be used by all schools and Towns. It would impact all of us. She asked Representative Alexander about the epidemic of violence or the culture of violence. It is actually a threat to the health of our citizens.

Representative Alexander stated you raise a relevant point that relates to the Newtown tragedy. We have an ongoing problem with public health that is a multifaceted problem. We have a national epidemic. It is a gun problem, law enforcement problem, parenting problem and violence in our culture and society problem that needs to be looked into. We need to address this now by looking into the manufacture of video games. He does not want to take the big brother approach but we need to look into this complex issue now.

Mr. Grady thanked the legislatures for coming tonight. He asked Senator Kissel about schools changing since December 14, 2012. School districts around the country have realized that security changes are needed. This will cost us money. Are we going to get any financial help with these new school changes?

Senator Kissel stated schools have changed since that day and it would be unfair for us to propose a mandate without funding it somehow. He believes that each school district will do what works best for them. There will not be a fix that will work for everyone. He spoke with Mayor Kaupin about an active shooter and the critical window. You need to stop the person as quickly as possible. He does not want to see us telling Towns what to do without any financial support. We need to put our money where it will do some good. This is an expensive item. Security in our buildings is going to cost us. More police in our buildings is costing Town's money. He will fight and do what he can. He does not want to fight for half measures. He knows that we need to show that we are responding and pass some kind of legislature on this in February. We need to see the police reports from the Newton tragedy but they will not be released until March. He feels we should see this information before we make our decisions.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the chart of accounts. Ms. Hall stated there is an agreement that everyone would use the same account numbers. Mrs. Szewczak stated it would be for accounting. Everyone would use the same numbers so you could see how much was being spent town by town. She believes having a common chart of accounts is a good thing. You can see numbers town by town. Mr. Jonaitis stated the account numbers would be standardized.

Mr. Fealy thanked them for attending tonight's meeting and for your comments about our joint Town Security Committee. He asked them if they agree that prohibition for legal minded citizens are not the answer to solving the school violence problem.

Representative Kiner stated New York passed their law very quickly. The Super Committee will come up with proposals that will go to committees for public hearings where you can voice your concerns. No one is trying to punish any lawful gun owners. It won't hurt gun owners to jump through one or more hoops in order to get a gun. We need to make it as hard as possible for those that are not lawful citizens to purchase guns.

Mr. Fealy asked if you are one voice when it comes to speaking at the legislative level about not looking for restrictions and bans. That you are looking to address health needs; mental or universal checks. There are some tentacles to this. When it comes to these issues will you be one voice.

Representative Kiner stated we will not have one voice on anything.

Senator Kissel stated we are a team and will have different opinions on guns. There are more hunters in this area are more libertarian when it comes to guns. Further down south, they are liberal with gun restrictions. This is an area where we will vote our conscious. The leader of his caucus is a co-sponsor for banning high caliber magazines and weapons. He represents Newtown. He has not had a chance to discuss this with him yet. He is very sensitive to this issue and does not want to see us banning and over taxing certain items. He also does not want to publish the names of every lawful gun owner. As part of the New York reform, they made it legal to publish the names of lawful gun owners. He is hoping we can reach a consensus here regarding gun control. We are just at the beginning of this process.

Representative Alexander stated we will work as one team but we will have different views and opinions. We need to review the information without making any judgment calls. Accountability is important. He is proposing a bill to the General Assembly in response to what happened at the East Windsor gun store with the AR-15's being unsecured. He has an extensive military background from being in the Marine Corp as a Lieutenant and knowledge about guns, ammunition, securing weapons and weapon accountability. He cannot support information on the internet regarding gun sales and weapons. This would not produce gun safety. He does support reducing the number of rounds. When it comes to gun control, we will disagree and that is a good thing. We need to look at this case by case.

Mr. Fealy asked if there has been any discussion regarding lifting of gun free zones at schools so a gun can be securely placed in case the need arises.

Senator Kissel stated Governor Malloy feels more guns is not the solution and does not want teachers carrying weapons. Every Town should make a decision based upon its own individual needs. He doesn't want to see one size fit all. He agrees with what Representative Alexander stated based on his extensive military background and gun safety and security at stores where guns are being sold. Last year, we took away ballistic checks for any guns that are found or confiscated to see if they are connected to any crimes because the forensic labs where buried. He believes we will need to add that back into the bill.

Chairman Neville is going to ask Senator Kissel, Representative Kiner and Representative Alexander to come back again. You are at the beginning of your budget discussions. We will send you some data for you to respond to.

Senator Kissel urged Board members to listen to the Governor's address to the public in February and give us your feedback on his address. That will help us as we go through the committee process.

**b. 2013-14 Budget Presentation – Part II:**

Dr. Schumann stated we will continue our presentation for the 2013-14 proposed budget, full day Kindergarten and staffing needs.

Mr. Drezek stated the Board created a plan for full day Kindergarten implementation on January 7, 2012. He reviewed Board Goal #3 – Embark on a quest to identify the best strategy(s) for implementation of a full day Kindergarten program in the Enfield Public Schools. The Board's theory of action – if the Enfield Public Schools affords all students with a full day Kindergarten program, then student achievement will improve and our learners will become better prepared for their academic careers.

Mr. Drezek reviewed Connecticut Kindergarten data with Board members. We looked at this process. He reviewed current staffing/class sizes, current enrollment, projections, conversion to full day Kindergarten at Henry Barnard, Enfield Street, Nathan Hale and Hazardville Memorial. We would need 11 Kindergarten teachers to keep our class sizes at 16.33.

Mr. Drezek stated through the allocation of 8 teachers to implement full day Kindergarten in all four primary schools in 2013-14 we will need 3 additional teachers, the class sizes would increase to 19.88. The primary school principals have graciously found the rooms to implement full day Kindergarten. Every room in our schools is being used. We would need to reutilize the rooms to accommodate full day Kindergarten.

Mr. Drezek reviewed academic support, space and facility analysis. He reviewed supplies and equipment needed. We have a lot of the equipment we had prior to the reorganization. Items were put into storage. Some materials will be hand-me-downs but the will is there. He reviewed transportation needs.

Mr. Drezek stated the additional cost to implement full day Kindergarten is \$224,359.00 or a .34% increase to the overall budget.

Mr. Drezek reviewed the benefits to full day Kindergarten. Full day Kindergarten leads to lower retention rates in grades 1-3; children receive 40-50% more instruction time; they are better prepared for first grade and they develop social/emotional/behavioral skills.

Mr. Drezek stated the Town of Enfield has been supportive of education in Enfield. How do we get our kids to stay here in Enfield? Getting them early and keeping them at the end is one way. We are building a great high school and full day Kindergarten is a way to keep them vested in our school system all the way through.

Mr. Sirard thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation. He stated we will not need as much intervention. He found the solutions to the staffing to be right on the mark. We will not need as high of an intervention level if we have full day Kindergarten by shifting teachers around. Our numbers will increase slightly but we will still be lower than State levels. This is a very feasible program based on your presentation and the research he has seen.

Mr. Jonaitis thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation. He stated we are making assumptions with full day Kindergarten. No one really knows what will happen by the time they reach high school. It sounds good. He does not like larger K-2 sizes and would like to see the numbers around 15-16. He feels 20 kids in a full day Kindergarten class are too large. He would like to see us add 2 additional Kindergarten classes. Low class size numbers should continue through grade 3. When they leave grade 3 you will know who will need help down the road. Parenting comes into play with Kindergarten children. Some cannot identify numbers or letters. If we could somehow subsidize the

town run daycare programs, it might not be a bad idea. As long as they are in a classroom, they will be getting more out of it.

Mr. Grady asked Board members for a general consensus from the Kindergarten teachers and Primary Principals present if these class size numbers would work. They agreed that these numbers would work. Some of our classes are around 20 now.

Mrs. Szewczak thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation. She is happy we have done this with our current framework from our reorganization. We are not looking to reorganize our schools to do this.

Mr. Sirard stated the projections for full day Kindergarten are on the high side. He personally feels the number is too high. We will be reducing some of the current class sizes. We are still within our research boundaries. He agrees with Mr. Jonaitis. It is a trade off and we will get better results.

Mrs. Rancourt thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation. She stated one of her children was retained in Kindergarten. A full day program would have helped him. Full day Kindergarten would have benefited two of her children,

Chairman Neville also thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation and keeping the numbers down. Living with a former Kindergarten teacher, he knows retentions are always a concern for teachers. Full day Kindergarten would have benefited many students that were retained. Additional time is needed in Kindergarten. As mentioned by Mr. Jonaitis, grade 3 is the key grade level and sets the mark for success in the upper grades.

Ms. Hall also thanked Mr. Drezek for the presentation for full day Kindergarten – kudos.

Both Mr. Jonaitis and Mrs. LeBlanc left the Board meeting at 9:00 PM

**c. Ratify ESNA Contract Agreement:**

Mr. Sirard stated the Enfield Board of Education negotiated a Tentative Agreement (TA) with the Enfield Schools Nurses' Association. The nurses ratified this TA unanimously on January 14, 2013. This is for a 3 year contract.

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Enfield Board of Education approves the ratified Nurses' Contract.

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

**11. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS – None**

**12. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS:**

Ms. Hall stated she has been invited to join the Department of Education Public Private Collaboration working on Early Childhood Education. The first meeting will be held on February 13, 2013. She will report back to the Board with updates from this committee.

Board members congratulated Ms. Hall. Chairman Neville added that Ms. Hall will represent us well on this Department of Education Committee.

**13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Regular meeting minutes of January 8, 2013 be approved. A vote by **voice 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Special meeting minutes of January 12, 2013 be approved.

Ms. Hall would like to change the section regarding policies to include – sending any policy related question/revision that does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Curriculum Committee, Student Issues Committee or the Finance, Budget Committee to the Executive Committee.

A vote by **voice 7-0-0** passed unanimously with changes mentioned by Ms. Hall.

14. **APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL** – None
15. **CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS** – None
16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** - None
17. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Sirard to adjourn the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Donna Szewczak  
Secretary  
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary