

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 8, 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 April 8, 2013.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Chairman Neville.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Neville
3. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Neville announced the fire evacuation announcement.
4. **ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Jonaitis, Vin Grady, Donna Szewczak, Tom Sirard, Jen Rancourt and Timothy Neville

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tina LeBlanc, Kevin Fealy and Joyce Hall

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

5. **FY2013-14 Budget Discussion**

Chairman Neville stated the Executive Committee met last week where Dr. Schumann presented new information regarding the budget shortfalls and Choice students. Last fall, we attended a meeting where they wanted us to take additional Choice students. CREC has come up with a proposal that Dr. Schumann will present to the Board. We will also need to address staffing in shortage areas due to retirements. In the past, we have given the administration our consensus to fill the shortage area positions.

Chairman Neville stated that Dr. Schumann, Mr. Drezek and he need to go upstairs for the Police Department Accreditation Hearing being held in Council Chambers later this evening.

Chairman Neville stated we asked Dr. Schumann to make \$250K in additional budget cuts that are included on his sheet that he will present to the Board.

Dr. Schumann reviewed his 2013-14 Budget Development Chronology sheet distributed to Board members. We found out that we needed to budget for pension adjustments. This is something we were unaware of. When you add in the proposed items identified on his sheet, we are short \$1,993,909 in the FY2013-14 Budget.

Dr. Schumann stated existing salaries would require \$604,944 to be included in the budget. To flat fund this line item, we would need to reduce approximately 15 teaching positions. Full day Kindergarten would require eight (8) teachers. Five (5) would be existing teacher positions and three (3) would be new positions.

Dr. Schumann reviewed CCSC & SEED Implementation needs at a cost of \$198,400. Adding elementary assistant principals would cost \$758,723 that are needed to implement SEED. We have reduced the iPad Consortium II original request to 100 new iPads. The middle school athletics line item was cut to \$5,100 by utilizing anticipated participation fees.

Dr. Schumann added the Town Council will most likely adjust the Town Manager's budget.

Dr. Schumann distributed a sheet regarding the Open Choice 2013-14 school year reimbursements based on current seat declarations. He reviewed the incentives if we take additional Choice students for 2013-14. He is recommending increasing our Choice number by twenty-seven (27) new students for next year. This would increase our reimbursement from \$198,000 to \$549,000 from CREC for Choice students.

Mr. Jonaitis asked what would be our total number of Choice students. Dr. Schumann stated we are proposing to increase our Choice number from sixty (60) to eighty-seven (87).

Mr. Sirard stated we usually take the Choice students in Kindergarten. The reason for that is they buy into our system. We have had problems in the past when taking Choice students in the middle school. They will not be accustomed to our rules and procedures and may become problem students. If we start them in Kindergarten, they are acclimated to our program. You are suggesting placing twenty-one (21) students in other grade levels. This could be a problem.

Dr. Schumann stated he has placed a call to see if they can get us twenty-seven (27) Choice students to be placed in grades K-3. Other towns have already declared their seats for 2013-14. Families declare the Towns they are interested in. We will now be picking up Choice students that didn't get into their number one town choices. CREC will still have a lot of seats that will need to be filled.

Chairman Neville added that we have control over where the Choice student will be placed. We did that once placing them in upper grades and stopped it.

Dr. Schumann stated we will need twenty-seven (27) Choice students to get the additional \$350,000.

Mrs. Szewczak stated that Avon is funding their full day Kindergarten with Choice funds. Mrs. Rancourt added that Simsbury also did this last year for their full day Kindergarten program.

Dr. Schumann stated a lot of towns are doing this. We could also do this with the additional funds.

Chairman Neville asked what if we can only get twenty (20) Choice students. Is it all or nothing or would we still get some additional funding from CREC? Dr. Schumann stated we will need to have 87 students enrolled on October 1<sup>st</sup> in order to get the funding.

Mr. Sirard does not want us to take the worst Choice kids. Dr. Schumann stated we will know who the students are.

Mr. Jonaitis stated our class sizes will increase with more students and this concerns him greatly. We have worked hard to get our class sizes to where they are.

Dr. Schumann stated we can only take six (6) in Kindergarten without increasing our class sizes.

Mrs. Szewczak stated parents will have the choice of sending their kids to Avon, Simsbury or Enfield to attend full day Kindergarten. We will get six (6) kids in Kindergarten.

Mrs. Rancourt asked who is responsible for the Choice program. Mr. Fenton used to be our contact person in the district.

Dr. Schumann stated Deborah Borrero is the Choice Director. Mr. Drezek stated Nancy Hayes is our contact person now. The students start off in her building.

Chairman Neville stated this is a viable option.

Mr. Sirard stated there is no guarantee. Chairman Neville added the parent makes a commitment just like parochial kids make a commitment.

Mr. Grady stated even if we fill the twenty-seven (27) seats we are still short in our budget. Dr. Schumann stated this would be \$350,000 of our \$2,000,000 shortfall.

Chairman Neville asked the Board if Dr. Schumann should proceed without making a formal commitment.

Dr. Schumann stated he will continue to talk with them about this. At some point we will need to talk to the families. We will need to do some work to get the correct twenty-seven (27) Choice students.

Mr. Grady stated we need to have them enrolled by October 1<sup>st</sup> in order to receive the financial incentives.

Chairman Neville added we treat them once they are enrolled here if they are from Enfield. They become one of our students that will graduate from our school district. The kids that we enroll are not some of our worst behavioral problems.

Mr. Sirard stated he does not want us to take a step backwards. Chairman Neville is against taking Choice students at the middle school. How much of a commitment can we get from CREC on this?

Dr. Schumann stated we can tell them we will take nine (9) students in grade 1, 2 and 3. We can also open up grade 4. This will be the decision of the Board.

Mrs. Rancourt stated we could take more Choice students in Kindergarten. Dr. Schumann stated that is correct. The question is can we get more than six (6) at this time. The families have already picked their top choices for which school district they are interested in.

Mr. Jonaitis stated if you start them off in Kindergarten you can work with them. If we bring Choice students in the upper grades they will bring some baggage with them. He does not want to see our class size numbers increase.

Chairman Neville would like to have Dr. Schumann explore this option without any formal commitments from us. Dr. Schumann will explore placements in grades K-3. We will get the lottery leftovers.

Mr. Sirard is also ok with Dr. Schumann exploring this and reporting back to the Board with his findings.

Mrs. Szewczak stated this will save us seven (7) teachers that we don't have to lay off.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if this will affect any of our grants with minority percentages. Chairman Neville stated there was a percentage at Alcorn prior to the elementary reorganization and does not believe this will affect any of our grants.

Mr. Sirard believes the Choice students are connected to the school district they are coming from and will not affect our Title I numbers.

Chairman Neville does not believe that is correct. Once they are here they are our kids and are

counted in our numbers. Both Dr. Schumann and Mr. Drezek agreed with Chairman Neville and added they are also included in our ECS numbers.

Mr. Sirard believes they are not included in Title I numbers. That is why we were racially out of balance at Alcorn. He does not believe Choice students are counted in our Title I numbers.

Mrs. Szewczak asked what schools are considered Title I. Mr. Drezek stated our Title I schools now are Hazardville Memorial and Enfield Street.

Chairman Neville stated Dr. Schumann has provided us with cuts for \$250,591. We are waiting for numbers from the State and were surprised to hear about pension numbers needed. Are there any other areas for possible savings we have not looked at?

Dr. Schumann stated we are holding an additional Governance Council meeting with Matt Coppler and Scott Kaupin to inform them of the hole that we are currently in. This way they will be fully aware of what we are wrestling with. We will also meet with the IT Committee and will review the budget costs for IT.

Mr. Sirard believes we can see some savings in the IT budget. He has been lobbying them hard regarding this. We are not getting our monies worth. They have sixteen (16) people working and there are many issues that are not being addressed. He stated we are moving towards the high school consolidation. We have not touched the high schools yet. We need to look here to get us prepared for the consolidation with staff reductions.

Chairman Neville added there will be a reduction of staff when we consolidate the high schools.

Dr. Schumann stated that both he and Mr. Drezek have started to look at this area today to see where possible reductions can be made.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if we will see any savings regarding the transportation line item for \$60,000 when we have full day Kindergarten. We will not need the mid day transportation runs.

Mr. Drezek stated we left the amount in that line item because we may need an additional bus to pick up/drop off the students being transported. Mrs. Szewczak stated there may be some savings. Dr. Schumann added if there are any savings, we will add it back into the budget.

Mr. Sirard asked what the cost for a bus is. Mr. Drezek stated \$40,000. We factored in for a bus and a half.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if we can charge for full day Kindergarten like they are in Massachusetts. Mrs. Rancourt stated we cannot do that in Connecticut because of a law prohibiting it.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if we can charge a fee for not passing courses. Mrs. Rancourt stated they pay for classes in summer school.

Mr. Sirard added we are looking for any way to save money. Chairman Neville stated there may be legal ramifications and we do not need the distraction. Mrs. Rancourt added that would almost be like pay for play.

Mrs. Szewczak stated you need to have at least ten (10) students in a high school class.

Mrs. Rancourt stated if we cut fifteen (15) staff positions it would bring our budget back in line.

Chairman Neville stated high school course scheduling needs to be done. Mr. Sirard stated we

should make our cuts and schedule around the cuts.

Dr. Schumann stated that would depend on where the cuts are going to be made. Chairman Neville stated you have both done the job and know about making cuts. Dr. Schumann added we could cut out an entire grade 7 team and have classes of 25. Is this something the Board would like at the middle school?

Mr. Sirard is looking at making cuts at the high school. Chairman Neville does not have a problem with this. He would like the administration to come back with some recommendations for the Board to look at.

Chairman Neville would like to see what the impact will be at each percent or half a percent. This is something Mrs. Szewczak mentioned.

Mr. Jonaitis would rather look at this in reverse. Start off with the number of teachers you will need to cut and see what you can bring back.

Chairman Neville would like to start with IT and have them cut 3 or 4 positions. Mr. Sirard agrees with Chairman Neville. He cannot understand why the IT budget has increased so much in three years.

Chairman Neville stated Mr. Jonaitis approach is somewhat the approach we have taken. We know how many teaching positions we can support. We will come up with a list for the Board to review and you will be able to see the impact for each reduction. These cuts will be ugly.

Mr. Sirard added IT will not play nice with us. Dr. Schumann stated the IT budget hasn't changed that much. Last year the money to pay for IT did not come out of our budget. The Town gave us \$776,000 and we gave it back. The IT Budget was \$3.8 million dollars. We only paid \$700,000. Now we need to pay for the entire IT budget.

Chairman Neville stated we actually are paying more because we saved 1% of our budget to be used to offset technology costs.

Mr. Sirard stated it was our money that paid for the IT budget. He does not understand how the amount increased from \$990,000 to \$1,900,000. The IT budget has doubled every year.

Chairman Neville stated the leases are costing us. They also charged us for the new phones. We also need to figure out the e-rate money.

Mr. Sirard believed if they privatized the IT department, we would get a better rate.

Dr. Schumann stated the Town Manager is also looking at staffing cuts in the IT Department.

Chairman Neville added we are at the point that we cannot afford it.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we are back to the point where it will be bodies or programs that will be cut. Chairman Neville added we are already at the bones. There is nowhere to cut. If we don't have the staff, we can't have the program.

Mr. Sirard does not want us to touch the elementary schools or the middle school. We need to look at the high schools.

Mr. Drezek stated we did cut a few positions last year from the high school. Mrs. Szewczak agreed with Mr. Drezek.

Mr. Sirard stated if we could combine classes from both high schools and transport the students you could make several cuts. We need to think outside of the box.

Dr. Schumann added there would not be enough time during the day to be transporting students back and forth between the two high schools.

Mrs. Rancourt stated that is where our technology would come into to play. One of the classes could be skyped or they can take the class on-line. Mr. Sirard stated that is a perfect example. They have been promising us technology that the upgrades will save us money. He has not seen any savings yet.

Mrs. Rancourt added you can also do course recovery on-line. We can also look at the librarians at both high schools. We could eliminate one of them.

Chairman Neville stated there seems to be a consensus among Board members for you to come back to the Board with some recommended numbers and positions. We discussed eliminating a librarian. This will start the consolidation process for the high school. Times are tough and we need to let everyone know.

Mrs. Rancourt added the architect told them they are building schools now without libraries. Chairman Neville added they are also not building computer labs either. They are now building media centers.

Mrs. Rancourt asked if she can ask for her child to be in a classroom next year that has iPads. She would be willing to purchase the iPad as long as her child can be in that pilot classroom.

Dr. Schumann stated we need to provide equal opportunity for all children.

Mr. Jonaitis added you would be paying for your child to be placed in that particular class. The problem is that everything must be equal with education.

Dr. Schumann stated he discussed this today with Mr. Bourassa regarding a 5 year replenish computer purchase for staff. We will need to look at the numbers to see if we could share desk top computers with teachers. The iPad would be the shared item.

Chairman Neville thought we did something like this. Leases are killing us. Is there a way to deal with this?

Mrs. Rancourt stated a pilot program in Mrs. Tarbox's classroom is what she is trying to get her son into for next year.

Dr. Schumann stated we pilot items all the time. He believes that would be ok. Mrs. Szewczak added once the pilot has been accepted, we will need to put them in all of the rooms.

Chairman Neville stated textbook companies will now be putting all of their books on-line and we will be paying for subscriptions.

Chairman Neville would like Dr. Schumann to come back with information. He does not want to wait until May to make cuts. We are short in our budget now.

Mr. Jonaitis would like to look at the budget on a need basis. We can add items into the budget this way you can see exactly where we are at.

Chairman Neville stated some of the items are mandated.

Dr. Schumann stated the list that is provided is setup that way except for the bottom two items. There are things we must do like common core.

Mr. Jonaitis would like us to eliminate the wants.

Chairman Neville would rather cut IT bodies than staff.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we need to look at licenses and leases. Chairman Neville stated we also need to look at servers and fiber optic lines.

Both Mrs. Szewczak and Mrs. Rancourt stated we need an IT audit.

Dr. Schumann will bring a list of recommended staffing cuts for the executive session tomorrow. He will also check on the Choice student placement numbers. We will have a better idea after we talk with Matt Coppler and Scott Kaupin. We can also address the shortage area positions in executive session.

Chairman Neville asked if Board members need Dr. Schumann to get anything else for tomorrow night. Dr. Schumann will bring the items mentioned for tomorrow's meeting.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Sirard to adjourn the Special Meeting of April 8, 2013.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Donna Szewczak  
Secretary  
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary