

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 18, 2012**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on December 18, 2012.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Neville.
2. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Neville announced the fire evacuation announcement.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Neville
4. **ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Jonaitis, Tina LeBlanc, Charles Johnson, Vin Grady, Donna Szewczak, Kevin Fealy, Jennifer Rancourt, and Timothy Neville

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Joyce Hall

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

Chairman Neville stated the Board of Education will hold off discussing the superintendent's evaluation until another time. Given the tragic events from last Friday that occurred in Newtown, the Board of Education and Town Council members felt it was more important to discuss safety of our students and the rumors that have been circulating about Enrico Fermi High School. The Mayor invited Chief Sferrazza and some of his staff along with Dr. Schumann and Chairman Neville to attend the Town Council meeting held yesterday to address safety concerns. Tonight we will hold a similar meeting for Board members to discuss concerns with the Chief Sferrazza regarding school safety and rumors at Enrico Fermi High School.

**5. BOARD GUESTS**

- a. Chief Sferrazza and Enfield Police Department Representatives

Chief Sferrazza thanked Chairman Neville for the opportunity to address the Board, the public and to answer any questions you may have. Chief Sferrazza introduced Deputy Chief Collins, Command Staff Captain Hall and Captain Golden. We send our condolences to the parents, families, residents and first responders in Newtown. We watched the events as they unfolded at the police department last Friday and we were all praying that the outcome would be different.

Chief Sferrazza stated there are 3 separate incidents at Fermi. All three incidents involved juveniles that are also students. One of the juveniles threatened to commit an act of violence. We take all threats of violence seriously and do not consider it to be a prank. We view this as a serious crime. This threat was treated like a crime and was investigated thoroughly. There were no weapons involved and the juvenile had no access to weapons. The comment was alarming and the individual was charged with breach of peace. Because of the age of the juvenile, no names will be released.

Chief Sferrazza stated a second incident occurred involving threats of violence at the school. This incident was also thoroughly investigated. There were no weapons involved and no plans were found. This person was also charged with breach of peace.

Chief Sferrazza stated there was a third incident where threatening comments were also made and the incident was thoroughly investigated. This individual was also charged with breach of peace.

There were no weapons found.

Chief Sferrazza stated all three separate incidents were investigated fully to the extent of the law. We met and discussed these incidents with Dr. Schumann. Dr. Schumann handled this from the schools side administratively. The rumors of guns in the school were not true. We are limited to what we can comment on due to the ongoing investigation and the age of the juveniles involved. We appreciate this opportunity to address these three issues publically.

Chairman Neville stated parents are looking for immediate information. We are also in a situation similar to the police department, where we are limited to what we can say while an investigation is underway. Parents want to hear as much information as possible. We are not hiding anything, but the investigation needs to proceed without any interference from us.

Chief Sferrazza understands the parents concerns for immediate information regarding rumors. Notices can be sent out to the parents about the incident, what occurred, there was no danger and the police are handling this incident. This way the parents are hearing from the administration first hand instead of hearing things via social media outlets or by rumors.

Chairman Neville agrees with Chief Sferrazza. We just do not want to give out too many details about the ongoing incident. We have been sending out information to parents via SchoolMessenger. The superintendent is trying to get out the information as quickly as we know something.

Chief Sferrazza stated after the events from last Friday in Newtown, we knew this would be a tough week and increased police presence at the secondary schools and were rotating police officers at the elementary level. This was done as more of a comfort level. Based on the feedback we received, this was the right thing to do this week.

Chief Sferrazza stated an active shooter is individual(s) with one mission, a primary focus to take as many lives as possible with no escape plan. After Columbine in 2006, we trained all Enfield police officers to handle active shooters. They are to get into the building, get to the threat or the shooter and protect life. We train with State police, on our own and are prepared for the worst. The Town Council has provided us with the materials needed. We are ready and pray that we never need to use it. Residents should know that we are prepared. The Town Council is putting together a subcommittee comprised with Town Council members, Board members and Police department personnel is an excellent idea. Our safety procedures will be enhanced and he looks forward to working with this subcommittee.

Mr. Jonaitis stated students came forward to the administration regarding rumors and mentioned the rumors to their parents. He urges parents to verify the rumor with a school administrator, the police department or by receiving a SchoolMessenger notice. Rumors spread very quickly.

Chairman Neville added we do not always see what is going on social media networks. You can call or e-mail us with any rumors or call the police if someone's life is being threatened. The social media is so quick and fast, that we cannot afford to wait to have the rumors validated.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated you should call the school or contact the police when you hear something from your kids regarding rumors. There is a lot of anxiety regarding the Friday basketball game. Rachel's club was formed to bring the students together by doing random acts of kindness. She is hearing that parents do not want to send their kids to school out of fear. The kids and the parents want them to be safe while they are at school.

Chief Sferrazza stated that we are aware of the rumor. Kids can go to school and will be safe. We have discussed the pep rally and it plays an important role in the education system. His staff will be present and they have a plan in place to ensure the safety of everyone in attendance. He will also be present at the pep rally.

Mr. Fealy thanked Chief Sferrazza and Deputy Chief Collins for coming tonight and addressing our

concerns. He is interested in the subcommittee. As a parent, follow-up information will give the public reassurance with the extra steps taken to protect our children. We are on this track and benchmarks for the community would be beneficial.

Dr. Schumann thanked Chief Sferrazza, Deputy Chief Collins and his command staff for coming tonight. We have met and have had many telephone conversations and he looks forward to their guidance as we move forward with this process. We met with all of our principals and discussed school entrances, buzzers and cameras. We are in the beginning phase of analyzing our security. The students at Enfield High will no longer be allowed to use the parking lot to get from D Wing to A Wing. The doors at Enrico Fermi High are not equipped with buzzers. Starting on Wednesday, a person will be placed at the entrance doors that will be locked. A greeter will direct any person(s) to the main office to sign in and will be given a badge. Our Chief Finance Officer will look into cameras and buzzers. The perimeter of our buildings will remain locked and the only area for entering the schools will be where a greeter has been placed.

Mr. Fealy stated by closing the parking lot area, EHS students will be late getting to classes. He hopes the staff will work with the students traveling the longest distance from A to D wing will be given latitude. Dr. Schumann stated he has addressed this concern with Mrs. Krieger and exceptions will be allowed for students traveling the longest distance.

Mrs. Szewczak asked about the response time is with the police department in Enfield. Chief Sferrazza stated the times will vary at different times. To get to Fermi it is approximately 1-½ minutes. An active shooter call would be a priority call and a response would be around 3-4 ½ minutes. It could be less. We have a number of staff on hand. We could get more cruisers to a school quicker than a big metropolis could. Everyone would be at the site for a code 1 call as quickly as we could get there. He believes we would have staff at a school within 3-4 minutes.

Mrs. Szewczak added that is what she would expect based on her own experience.

Chairman Neville asked when there is an active shooter call does this call also go to the State police? Chief Sferrazza stated the call will go through our dispatcher not the State police. We have our own internal plan for active shooters if assistance is needed.

Mr. Johnson asked if the police department has plans to all of our schools and access points. Chief Sferrazza stated yes with scenarios for access points. Deputy Collins added that every police cruiser has plans.

Mr. Johnson stated he attended an active shooter training class and it was truly remarkable. We have SRO's at the secondary schools. Can we do the same in the elementary schools? We need to protect our children. Chief Sferrazza agrees with Mr. Johnson. We have been busy the past few days making plans. Providing some kind of SRO at the elementary level is something he has been thinking about. We will discuss this further as we progress with the subcommittee. Your concern is shared by the entire command staff.

Mr. Johnson stated schools are considered a gun free zone. Is there any possibility of having armed security in our schools? An active shooter will continue to shoot until he is stopped by equal force. The shooter in Newtown heard sirens when he took his own life.

Chief Sferrazza stated that is the norm with an active shooter. He thanked the Board for approving the Statute for hand gun possession by the police department when in a school. There is a provision in the law that would allow for this providing it is approved by the Board of Education. This was unanimously approved by the Board last year. Any sworn police officer can carry a concealed weapon on school grounds. Armed security guards have been discussed and we will be exploring all possibilities.

Mr. Johnson stated he agrees with police officers being allowed to carry weapons on school grounds. He asked if school staff can carry a weapon on school grounds.

Chief Sferrazza stated we have discussed this and it is illegal but the Board can waive this. He is not saying that he endorses this, but it is a possibility. This will be discussed further and it is his hope that the subcommittee can address this and will come up with a direction for implementation in a short timeframe.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we have certified staff members that are currently in the National Guard or Army Reserves that have received military training. Maybe we can give access to staff members that are certified to carry weapons by allowing them to get to a secure location to retrieve a weapon in the building is a possibility.

Mr. Grady commended the students for coming forward with the rumors they heard. He encourages them to continue doing this and the police department for not taking these rumors lightly. Our kids have changed and are standing up for their rights. They want to be safe in their schools and he commends them.

Chief Sferrazza agrees with Mr. Grady. We have seen changes in our airports. School shootings may not be common but it does not diminish the impact they have. We take this seriously. Many times the community is looking for us to make an arrest. There is a due process and we need to do our due diligence. Burden of proof and probable cause are needed to make an arrest. Every case will be investigated and if warranted an arrest will be made.

Mr. Fealy stated if you have a gun permit by the State of Connecticut and are trained to use a gun it should not be a prohibition. This Board has the right to secure our schools along with the police department and do it as quickly as possible. Are we conducting drills in our schools and for our staff to minimize harm or loss of life?

Chief Sferrazza stated the school has policies in place for this and he would defer this to Dr. Schumann. Mr. Fealy thought this would be coordinated with the police department. Chief Sferrazza stated when they were first put in place they were done collaboratively with the police. They have their own protocols in place for this.

Dr. Schumann stated per the Connecticut General Statute drills are conducted every month and three of the drills are crisis response drills and the other seven are fire drills. The plans for a crisis response or lockdown drills were made with the police department. We have reviewed our plans with the principals. The police department staff is trained and we are looking to them for additional training. They will be invited to attend our drills to critique us as well as classroom training. We will also use professional development time to work with our teachers for the safety in our schools. We are looking forward to working with the police department to enhance our drills.

Chairman Neville stated we changed our meeting to discuss safety in our schools. We want to move quickly by responding and not reacting. As we move forward with the subcommittee we will let the public know some of our goals. We will discuss some of our weaknesses in our security. We want to be able to respond and have policies and practices in place and will make sure our staff carries this plan out to keep our kids safe. Every school system out there is looking at ways to improve on safety. He thanked the police department for their help and cooperation. You always respond to all of our questions.

Chairman Neville thanked them for everything they do. We are one of the few towns that have gotten involved with active shooter drills and are a model for other towns. He applauds the police department and congratulates you for everything you do for our town. We will now have an audience participation session. He will refer the question to those that can answer them best.

## **6. AUDIENCES**

Jill Krawiec, Town Farm Road – She is very impressed with the Board, the new superintendent and your responses. Last year we would receive letters home with the elementary school students. This

year she has been receiving your robo calls but did not receive any responses from Fermi. She heard about what was happening at Fermi and expected to receive follow-up messages. She had made arrangements to pick up her child at JFK and at FHS and went to Fermi after she had just heard about what happened in Newtown. She was really upset and wanted to speak to the principal. The office staff did not know who she was. The staff just told her it was a rumor. She receives information within a day from JFK. The robo calls are okay but more follow-up is needed. She does not want to see school staff members with guns. Police or someone hired for that job are the ones that should carry fire arms. Teachers are there to teach. People have problems.

Dr. Schumann would like to talk with Ms. Krawiec and asked her to call his office on Wednesday regarding your concerns at the high school.

Tom Sirard, D'Annunzio Avenue – Mr. Sirard stated you handled yourselves very well over the past couple days. He has small children and the events that occurred in Newtown touch him deeply. He is confident with our police department. He likes the idea of a subcommittee to address these issues. We have educational choices in Enfield. We have 2 parochial schools, CREC Public Safety Academy, Montessori School and the public schools. He would like all the schools in Enfield to be included in the plan. They are all part of our community. No idea should be discouraged. Armed personnel in our schools are not a bad idea. Active shooters stay away from guns. Retired veteran's, retired policemen or on the lines of the air marshals are not bad ideas. They would be there if needed. Our children are precious. Thank you.

Mark Morell, Old Abbe Road – Mr. Morell stated he came here with some concerns. We have a lot of plans within the fire service and he was wondering about our drills in the schools. You have answered that concern. Parent feedback from the schools needs improvements. The kids are doing a wonderful job. The schools need to share information about what is going on. On Monday, he went to Fermi because he did not know what was going on. He walked right into the building. Kids were there and he could have walked through the entire building and no one would have known he was there. There are after hours when children are in the building. Someone could leave something in the building at night. Metal detectors would not stop things from being brought in at night. This is a big security concern. Our schools are open at night. He knows this will be addressed by the subcommittee.

Dr. Schumann stated we are aware of this. The buildings are used by community groups into the evening. This is a concern for many communities. After hour use will be discussed by the subcommittee. We have never planned for a secure perimeter for after hours and this will be discussed. Mr. Morell stated he goes into many schools for his job and when they conduct lock down drills and are instructed to go to the office. He was shocked to see after Friday, you could walk right into the building.

Chairman Neville added we will look into all questions and areas. Our buildings are being used until 11:00 PM. We are being forced to relook at how we are using our buildings.

Mr. Morell added we use key cards at the fire department and that is how we get into the schools. This might be something to look into. Chairman Neville stated we need to look at what our options are and appreciate your ideas.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the elementary schools are locked after hours. She believes the afterhours concern is more at the secondary schools. The doors are also locked down by the gym area.

Judy LeDoux, Spruceland Road – Ms. LeDoux stated some schools are setup with buzzers. Rumors typically have some truth to them. She is glad to see that we are taking this seriously and trying to make our schools more secure. Our kids are living in a different world and she wants them to have a positive experience while in school. Examples are needed when a student does something wrong. The kids do not know what the consequences are regarding the discipline. They think nothing is being done and nothing will change. Make sure the students know that they have been arrested for making threats and that it will not be tolerated. She would like to see parents added to the

subcommittee. She does not want staff members having guns in our schools. Leave this to our professionals. Having a professional in our school system is a good idea. The robo calls were not enough. Additional notifications are needed. The information needs to be sent out on a timely fashion. Can the robo calls be sent to her cell phone.

Dr. Schumann stated the SchoolMessenger system has a parent portal. Information regarding this went home with students yesterday. You can log into the SchoolMessenger system. We will upload information daily. Once you make the changes, we cannot make any additional changes.

Chairman Neville stated we are in a similar situation as the police regarding sharing information. Chief Sferrazza stated per State law a juvenile is 17 years old or younger. It is against the law to release the name of any juvenile that commits a crime. If that individual was to go through a red light, we can release the name of a juvenile.

Ms. LeDoux is okay with not releasing a name. The kids need to know that the juvenile was arrested. The word of the arrest did get out through social media.

Dr. Schumann stated the students know very quickly what has happened to a juvenile pretty quickly. School administrators cannot discuss the discipline offense except with the parents and juveniles only per State law. We cannot make any reasonable connection between the student and the offense and the discipline. Announcements can be made but we are limited to what we can say.

Ms. LeDoux would rather hear from the administration instead of hearing things from the students and the rumor mill.

Mr. Fealy stated we need to communicate to parents. We approved during our last budget cycle additional counselors and social workers regarding mental health of students will also be addressed.

Dr. Schumann added we have social workers and school counselors on site. He is amazed at the amount of work they do working with our students and their families. They are there working with students especially at the elementary level that are exhibiting signs of distress or behavioral issues. We have good resources in place.

Chairman Neville thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and taking part in this discussion. Our intent is to continue this dialogue as we continue this process. Based on what we heard tonight, communication needs to be improved. If you hear a rumor, call us or e-mail us. We need to hear from you. We do not take this as a joke. We take this seriously and encourage you to contact us. We want to work and communicate with you. The police will also work with you.

Chairman Neville thanked Chief Sferrazza and his staff for being here.

## **7. ACTION, IF ANY, ON STUDENT SUPPORT ACADEMY**

Mr. Jonaitis asked how this item was placed on the agenda. Chairman Neville stated it was planned to be on the Special Meeting agenda along with the Superintendent's evaluation and has time constraints to either approve the item or not approve it.

Dr. Schumann stated a student support academy was previously done at Enfield Street School and Thomas G. Alcorn and has been done across the state in other schools. The intent of the support academy is to provide students with additional support. Our teachers will work with students after school based on the information provided in the memo Board members received tonight. This student support academy concept has been discussed with the principals.

Dr. Schumann reviewed the schedule with Board members and is looking for the Board's endorsement for the student support academy.

Chairman Neville asked about the timeframe and financial cost associated with this program. Dr.

Schumann stated with maximum participation with groups of 6 students using the hourly contract rate for summer school, it would cost around \$20K to run the program. The funds would come from our salary account and the Finance Committee members are aware of it and could be allocated to this program.

Chairman Neville asked how many days a week and how long would the program run? Dr. Schumann stated it would start toward the end of January 2013 and would run until the middle of March 2013.

Mr. Grady asked if there would be bussing costs. Dr. Schumann stated there would be no transportation costs. Parents would pick the students up at the school.

Mr. Jonaitis stated this is similar to the program at JFK a while ago. He is wondering why regular after school help wouldn't work. You are talking about a small group of kids that need help. He can see the benefit with extra help. This is a long time period for kids to be in an academic setting. We have specialist that provide extra help for students that need it.

Chairman Neville asked how many students would receive help at the maximum level. Dr. Schumann does not have the information available but could get it.

Chairman Neville assumes these would be students that have been screened, identified, are having significant difficulties and are already receiving interventions. Dr. Schumann stated that is correct. We would use our benchmark data and would invite students to attend this support academy.

Mr. Johnson asked how many staff members are we looking at using for this support academy. Dr. Schumann stated it would depend on the number of students participating. We would need one teacher for every six students and approximately \$20K or 588 man hours. Ms. McKernan has made calculations based on the numbers she would like to see participate in this program.

Mr. Fealy appreciates the efforts. This adjustment is a reallocation of funds that have already been budgeted for. Is there a way that this support academy could be skyped or have web access so students not attending could also benefit from this program?

Mrs. Rancourt stated this is preparation for CMT and CAPT. She likes the structure for this and feels it would be a great program especially for students that struggle with tests like the CMT and CAPT. As a parent she would make the time to have her child attend this program. The structure of the program is different than regular after school help. This program has been discussed at the Curriculum meeting and she supports it.

Mr. Johnson stated students get nervous taking the standardized tests. He does not want to teach to the test. We are spending money and it makes no sense to him to put this kind of pressure on our kids. We are emphasizing teaching to the test by spending \$20K.

Mrs. Szewczak stated benchmarks for student learning is needed. We need to see where they are at and where they need additional assistance by these standardized tests. She likes Mr. Fealy's idea.

Mr. Fealy stated it could be a subsequent area for assistance. He thought the need for this program was to help students in the deficiency areas. If this is for test prep his opinion would be different. If this program is to receive additional curriculum content that will lead towards being able to take a test better.

Chairman Neville stated we are looking at the student's skill levels and their proficiency. This program would be based on skills. They would be learning life skills. By getting these skills, they will be more successful. These additional skills learned would help to close the gap a little bit more.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we should strive to get maximum participation. This will help kids get further. There are students that are just getting by. The additional help will help them to succeed. We

should use our efforts to maximize this program.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the benchmarks are identified and the reason for this program is for the kids to do better on the CMT and CAPT tests. If that is not the reason, what we are saying is our curriculum is not working for these students. That is what needs to change. We can't have students going to a regular day program and have them get additional schooling. If they need help in certain areas it should be done for the most part during the regular school day. This could be accomplished by extending the regular school day by 15 minutes.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated students are receiving CMT prep during the day. This is extra help. There are kids with learning difficulties beyond the CMT/Math/Reading blocks. This is a way to offer additional help. She feels this is a win-win.

Mr. Johnson believes this will help them learn how to cram for a test. By doing this they will not learn anything. This is what he is afraid of. They will not retain anything.

Mrs. Szewczak moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves a Student Support Academy starting on January 24<sup>th</sup> through March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013 with a maximum budget of \$20K.

### **Discussion:**

Mr. Fealy has a child with reading comprehension concerns that has impacted his ability to focus on reading skills needed. He does not recommend teaching to the test prep. He is encouraged about this program because if his child's needs were addressed sooner, his time in high school would be more enjoyable. His son needs the skill-set and this program can provide this. If he finds out the students are not receiving the skill-sets needed, this program's progress should be re-evaluated. We need to benchmark the program's success in a month. He wants to see tangible results in the content core areas.

Mrs. Rancourt feels this a good time for this program. The kids are getting extra help during the day. This will help the students that have not mastered the skills they should have mastered. There are students receiving additional help. Small group one-on-one instruction is needed and this is a great time to be starting this program.

Mr. Johnson asked if there is any benefit to having them stay after school for an hour and a half. Would after school help be better? He would like to discuss this with educators that have used this program to see if it is beneficial or are we teaching our kids how to cram for a test.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the more exposed you are the more you learn. This is something kids should be doing at home with their parents. There is good to this program. He does not like the long day.

Mr. Johnson asked if this is worth \$20K. Mr. Jonaitis stated that would be up to you to decide.

Mr. Jonaitis stated this was presented by Ms. McKernan at a curriculum meeting and you received a detailed presentation on this. This is information we did not receive. Mrs. Rancourt stated Dr. Schumann reviewed what the program will entail. Mr. Jonaitis stated this is the second time something has been presented that the entire Board did not know about.

Chairman Neville added anyone can attend these meeting. We are bringing this up for the entire Board to approve. Mr. Jonaitis stated this is just like the Lego program. We are being asked to vote on something before we understand it. We are not going about this the correct way. Did we check with staff members about this program to see if there is interest?

Mrs. Szewczak stated Ms. McKernan checked with staff to see if there was interest. That is why we are bringing this up before the Board for approval. If there wasn't support it would be a moot point.



Mrs. Rancourt stated there is staff support for this.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we need to stay away from cramming for tests. They are teaching strategies to reinforce what has been learned by students in order to get them ready to move forward. All committee meetings are open to the public. She would love to see additional people at the Finance meetings.

Chairman Neville stated our kids have gone through informal and formal assessments. We have tried all kinds of assessments by this point. Some of the students are still not learning and need additional learning assistance. Some kids need the information dissected so they can understand. This is identified skill training to allow these kids to master the skills needed.

Mr. Fealy stated the \$20K is already in the budget. We will not be taking away from anything or impact anything already in the budget. Dr. Schumann stated you are correct. This program will not take away from anything. The funds are already in our salary line item account.

Mr. Johnson stated just because we have extra money we do not have to spend it.

Mr. Johnson asked if the students will be learning skills or will they be learning how to answer similar questions that will be on the tests. Dr. Schumann stated the program is to provide additional assistance to students in strengthening their skills and expanding their content knowledge. There will be a question and response section to the academy to know if gains are being made.

Mr. Johnson asked if we can change the motion to look at the program in three weeks to see if gains are being made and if the program is working. If no gains are being made, the program should then be disbanded as mentioned by Mr. Fealy.

Chairman Neville would like to see the assessment data come back to us at the end of the program so we can see the gains. Evaluating the program after 3 weeks would not give us an accurate assessment. The information learned after the completion of the academy will give us information needed for down the road. We need to address the skills now especially with the elementary kids.

Mr. Johnson asked if we would provide the snack for the kids. Mrs. Szewczak stated we can move the snack time around if needed.

Mr. Jonaitis does not believe skills will be mastered in 6 weeks. If this is going to be a program that is not part of the normal day why can't we hire teachers to run this program instead of using the contractual ETA rate? We might be able to get twice as many staff.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we don't want to teach to the test but we are putting a lot of pressure on these kids mastering skills. We might need to use other measures. We also need to measure how the student feels taking these test. If they are confident, they will go further and will succeed.

Mr. Jonaitis stated when the test starts you cannot read to them or help them. Mrs. Szewczak has seen this. Once they hear the clock has started, fear comes over them.

Mr. Fealy asked if this is a trial to see if this program will work. He supports it. It will help identify deficiency with our education and can help to identify as mentioned by Mr. Jonaitis areas in our curriculum that are not working. We need to improve students understanding of material. This is a direct educational issue. Has Ms. McKernan done this support academy in other schools? If she has, we will have a benchmark in some level to see if it is working here.

Mr. Johnson asked if this can be broken up into two days for the kids in the elementary grades. Mrs. LeBlanc stated you will run into a problem with students doing other activities. You might lose some kids by splitting this into two days.

Chairman Neville stated he is looking at this as a pilot. Let's see how it works. We need to address

the student's needs now.

Mr. Johnson would like to know if this program is being used at other schools and if they are successful. He thinks it is worth making some calls tomorrow to find out about this. Mrs. Zalucki stated they are using this program at PSA and MLC.

Chairman Neville believes it is worth trying this program out now.

Mr. Johnson asked what the grade levels are at MLC & PSA. Mrs. Zalucki stated grades 6-12.

Mr. Fealy shares Mr. Johnson's concern regarding the length of the day for the elementary students. He is ok with trying this program out for six weeks. Chairman Neville agrees with trying out this pilot program.

A vote by **roll-call 6-1-1** passed with Mr. Johnson in dissent and Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

Chairman Neville stated several subcommittees will be formed with the Town on efficiencies, facilities and security. If you would like to be on any of the subcommittees please let him know. He will be meeting on Thursday for their Governance meeting and will discuss membership to these subcommittees.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Fealy to adjourn the Special Meeting of December 18, 2012. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Donna Szewczak  
Secretary  
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary