

Filed subject to approval

EASTON, REDDING, REGION 9 JOINT BOARDS OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING
August 11, 2020 - 7:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom and viewable via YouTube

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Meeting ID: 815 9480 2826

Passcode: 702716

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board Members:

Easton: J. Stinson, G. Goldstein, J. Chieda, R. Hicks, J. Parker, D. Wible

Redding: C. Parkin, C. Pilato, C. Hocker, M. Hoffman, S. Oulton, J. Reilly, H. Whaley

Region 9: T. Johnston, M. D'Agostino, G. Denny, C. Graziano, K. O'Brien, M. Pampel, M. Williams

Absent: J. Berry

Administration: R. Harrison, S. Pierson Ugol, S. Reiss, J. Del Conte, G. Pin, P. Amori, S. Kaplan, K. Fox
Santora, N. Hammond

Others: Approximately 350+ members of the staff and public via Zoom and YouTube

The Redding Board of Education meeting was called to order by C. Parkin at 7:35 p.m.

The Easton Board of Education meeting was called to order by J. Stinson at 7:35 p.m.

The Region 9 Board of Education was called to order by T. Johnston at 7:35 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Heather Satin, Fairview Farms, Redding - Shared that the public is learning primarily about the physical aspects of reopening the school but not enough is being shared about how students are going to learn. Given the challenges with Distance Learning in the spring, she requested more information about the way in which students will be engaged in learning this school year.

Lynn Loesch, Black Rock Turnpike, Easton - As an Easton paraprofessional, she shared concerns about the safety of reopening the schools. She notes the unsuccessful reopening of schools in other areas of the country. In addition, medical experts admit they were wrong about children contracting and transmitting the virus. She believes that ER9 is rushing a return to school and putting lives at risk.

Emily Kilbourn, Pine Mountain, Redding - Shared concerns regarding the health and safety of returning to school. New science indicates the virus is airborne therefore she questions the protection provided by plexiglass dividers. Teachers are now considered essential workers. She and her husband teach at Ridgefield High School. With a hybrid model, her son will attend two days a week while they work five. She asks, what do working families do? Children pose risks to elderly grandparents who may be living in the same home or providing childcare.

Beatrix Eriksen, Sidecut Road, Redding - Reported her family will be choosing the Temporary Learn from Home option for her two children. She asks what her children's day will look like. What percentage of the curriculum will be covered for students who are learning from home every day?

Victoria Ericson, Starrs Ridge Road, Redding - Reported her family will be choosing the Temporary Learn from Home option for her children. She would like a detailed description of this option in writing. She also asks how parents can formally choose that option. As a working parent, she hopes there will be flexible access to instruction.

Vincent Mase, Fieldstone Drive, Easton - Complimented teachers for coming together last spring. He believes that teachers who do not want to teach in person should have the option to teach remotely. He is an advocate of the in-school option.

Kristi Sogofsky, Bayberry Lane, Easton - She thanked the administration for their work. She raises the question: if we don't go back to school now with our favorable state numbers, when will we go back? She understands concerns, but the positives outweigh the negatives.

Lindsay Lukacs, Easton - Her son received a spot through the lottery system in the 3's program at Samuel Staples. He will not be attending; will he be able to keep his spot for next fall?

Danni Garavito, Ledgewood Road, Redding - She asked: Have we done any research on negative pressure? She suggested evaluating air on a daily basis, given the nature of this virus.

Sherri Williams, Reilly Road, Easton - Connecticut metrics support children in the building. If not at full capacity, what do the numbers need to look like in order for a full opening? Distance Learning is very difficult. Children need time in the classroom. Parents need to get back to work. She is concerned about grades suffering and student depression. She is advocating for parents whose voices have not been heard.

Kristen Anstett, Whortleberry Road, Redding - Two questions were raised: What is the threshold for a class or school to switch to the Distance Learning model? If students are distance learning, is there fluidity? Can students move in and out of in-person instruction?

Krista Zilberg, Lobdell Lane, Easton - Requested that special education administration be more transparent, further communication is needed as the year begins.

Neil Parker, undisclosed address- Complimented the administration; he is incredibly impressed with the professionalism. He continued that there is not a perfect solution, and everyone is trying their best. This isn't a mandate; parents and children can make a decision for themselves.

Lara Fayek, Wilson Road, Easton - Advocated for the hybrid model, a slow reopening. At half capacity, staff can make sure all mitigation efforts are working.

Amy Arnold, Werf Drive - In response to an earlier question regarding the circulation of air. Even at hospitals, the negative exhaust systems are not possible which is why there are AFB rooms. Will the isolation rooms be AFB exhaust rooms so that the air in this space is not circulating elsewhere in the school? Given the virus numbers are low, it does make sense to reopen schools, but why are libraries and Topstone at less capacity? Why are we still limiting outdoor capacity, yet we think it is safe to spend an extended amount of time indoors?

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

C. Parkin underscored the importance of patience this evening; everyone is doing all they can, putting safety first.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: APPOINTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Joseph Erardi, the Superintendent search consultant, described how the search committee, with his guidance, selected the new Superintendent of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 schools. R. Hicks and C. Hocker chaired the steering committee. Nine additional board members comprised a subcommittee. R. Hicks said it was a challenging process, and that Dr. Erardi was very helpful. He is excited about the new Superintendent. C. Hocker said of the 29 completed applications, seven were current Superintendents, seven Principals, seven Assistant Superintendents and the others were Central Office administrators. All candidates were from Connecticut or neighboring states. The search attracted a wide variety of people with a wide variety of skills.

MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education (a) in accordance with Connecticut General Statute section 10-157 appoints Dr. Rydell Harrison to serve as superintendent of schools with an anticipated start date of August 27, 2020 (b) that the Chair be authorized to execute the proposed contract between Dr. Harrison and the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education as joint employees, and (c) that the Personnel Search Committee's work, including the work of the steering subcommittee, be deemed complete and the committee dissolved. (Goldstein, Chieda). Approved. Unanimous

MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education (a) in accordance with Connecticut General Statute section 10-157 appoints Dr. Rydell Harrison to serve as superintendent of schools with an anticipated start date of August 27, 2020 (b) that the Chair be authorized to execute the proposed contract between Dr. Harrison and the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education as joint employees, and (c) that the Personnel Search Committee's work, including the work of the steering subcommittee, be deemed complete and the committee dissolved. (Whaley, Pilato). Approved. Unanimous

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education (a) in accordance with Connecticut General Statute section 10-157 appoints Dr. Rydell Harrison to serve as superintendent of schools with an anticipated start date of August 27, 2020 (b) that the Chair be authorized to execute the proposed contract between Dr. Harrison and the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education as joint employees, and (c) that the Personnel Search Committee's work, including the work of the steering subcommittee, be deemed complete and the committee dissolved. (Williams, O'Brien). Approved. Unanimous

C. Hocker introduced Dr. Rydell Harrison. C. Parkin thanked Dr. Erardi and the steering committee for finding a permanent Superintendent in approximately five weeks. J. Stinson thanked Dr. Erardi and the steering committee. Dr. Harrison thanked R. Hicks and C. Hocker as well as the steering committee. It was a rigorous interview process. He is excited to join the community of students, staff and parents. He has five children ranging in ages 7-22, and this is the lens he brings to his work. He believes that ER9 has a fine reputation; it will be a privilege to be a part of this system. Dr. Harrison particularly looks forward to a partnership with students: "I will always listen to what you have to say."

He discussed the importance of strong leadership during tough times; he is committed to doing what is best for students, staff and parents, and he thanked the community for giving him this opportunity.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: REOPENING UPDATE

Dr. Pierson Ugol welcomed Dr. Harrison. She looks forward to a long and collaborative relationship.

Dr. Pierson Ugol reviewed the timeline for the State Department of Education that shaped this summer's work on the reopening plan and shared that now districts may reopen fully in school or hybrid models, and the choice to open in hybrid does not have to be driven by health data.

The Administration recommended that ER9 open in a Hybrid model which provides a diagnostic time for staff and students to get accustomed to the new protocol. Families still have the option to choose the Temporary Learn from Home model.

Dr. Pierson Ugol requested that the school year be delayed until the day after Labor Day, September 8th because of delays caused by Tropical Storm Isaias. The plan is to follow a Hybrid model from September 8th through October 2nd. Positive cases of the virus will be handled according to state guidelines; and the administration is awaiting those guidelines.

Temporary Learning from Home can be selected by families when the district is offering All-In or Hybrid models. Students will have access to curriculum and instruction. There will be some use of live streaming. The school will assemble materials for home use. Students will be included in the Google Classroom platform, K-12. Students will participate daily and will be expected to complete work in a timely manner. Attendance will be taken. Students opting for Temporary Learning from Home will be able to participate in remote clubs. This decision is not binding. If opting to return to in-person instruction, families are asked to provide 5-10 days to opt into transportation and three days to enter the building. There will be a survey to indicate interest in this model. If families decide to take this option after the school year begins, they will contact the building administrator.

N. Hammond presented the Hybrid model for both Easton and Redding elementary schools. Students with last names beginning with A-K will attend in person on Monday and Tuesdays. Students with last names beginning with L-Z will attend in person on Thursday and Friday. FPA's will follow a five week rotating schedule. The teachers will come to the classroom. Physical Education will be outside as much as possible.

At home, live streaming will occur for core subjects: literacy, math, science and social studies. Then students move to independent work. At this time, students may refer to assignments in Google Classroom.

Wednesdays will feature Distance Learning.

Dr. Pin shared the Hybrid plan for middle school and high school. The goal, she states, is to maximize content time with teachers. There will be an emphasis on social emotional learning through daily Advisory meetings.

Mrs. Kaplan shared a sample middle school schedule for Helen Keller which features staggered passing times and larger blocks for core academic subjects. There are reduced transitions in the course of the school day and more time to pass between classes so students do not rush. There will be a Town Hall

Meeting for families to attend (virtually) in the near future that will provide the answers to many questions regarding the reopening of the middle schools.

Dr. Amori shared the John Read Middle School schedule which is intended to keep things as normal as possible. There is a "Homebase" time daily in order to touch base with an Advisor. Cohorts will stay as close as physically possible throughout the day. Transition times will be staggered. Dr. Amori welcomes questions from families.

Dr. Pin shared that during the Hybrid model, students will follow a "Falcon Day" schedule, every period meets every day. Lunch period is a little longer. On Wednesdays, office hours will begin at 9:30AM; students surveyed indicated a preference for a later start. Students will be expected to log on at this time in order to attend small group discussions or extra help, for example.

Preschool for both Easton and Redding: All students will be coming in four days (not Wednesdays). On Wednesdays, students with IEP's will have contact with the Case Manager (virtually). Wednesday afternoons will be dedicated to curriculum planning across both districts as preschool curriculum is changing. This delivery model will be reevaluated mid-year.

Ms. Roszko shared that Michael DeStefano will begin as Director of Special Education on August 21st. Many students will do fine with the Hybrid model; however, some students will need to attend on all four days. A collaborative approach with parents will be used to decide which students would benefit.

Dr. Pierson Ugol shared the next steps. Families will indicate if students will participate in in-person learning by completing a survey. If families have a question that needs a response prior to completing the survey, they are asked to call building administrators or Dr. Pierson Ugol. Bus runs need to be created. Administration will continue to work on reopening plans. Training videos for parents and staff on topics such as safety, traffic flow, and technology (for example: helping parents navigate Google Classroom and other tech tools) are being created. Some will be through live sessions, some training videos. Live sessions will be held the week prior to the start of the year. Parent Town Hall meetings will be held at each level. Unlike a Board meeting, there will be time to ask questions and receive answers from building leaders and Central Office administration. Please refer to the FAQ. Over three hundred questions have been raised. The Central Office staff is working to consolidate information. New students to the district can contact building administrators for a tour of the building. Orientations will be scheduled for grades moving to a new building. Athletics will be discussed at next week's Region 9 Board meeting. The SAT will be held on September 23rd for seniors, only if they haven't used their voucher. Juniors can take the free SAT in March.

MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education endorse the Superintendent's proposed hybrid reopening plan for the first four weeks of the academic year, with the understanding that any subsequent changes to the learning model be made at the discretion of the Superintendent in consultation with public health officials and state guidance. (Hicks, Goldstein). Approved, 5-0-1. (J. Parker abstained due to technical difficulties.)

MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education endorse the Superintendent's proposed hybrid reopening plan for the first four weeks of the academic year, with the understanding that any subsequent changes to the learning model be made at the discretion of the Superintendent in consultation with public health officials and state guidance. (Oulton, Hocker). Approved, 6-1-0. (M. Hoffman opposed.)

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education endorse the Superintendent's proposed hybrid reopening plan for the first four weeks of the academic year, with the understanding that any subsequent changes to the learning model be made at the discretion of the Superintendent in consultation with public health officials and state guidance. (Graziano, Pampel). Approved. Unanimous.

R. Hicks asked Dr. Pierson Ugol to elaborate on the decision to move to the Hybrid model. Dr. Pierson Ugol replied that the model allows time to ease into a school year with many new procedures, a transition with fewer people in the building will allow that learning to occur without the pressure of full occupancy.

D. Wible responded that primary students need to repeat procedures consistently. How will they be able to do this given the Hybrid model? It makes sense to keep preschoolers in for four days. Why not consider this with primary students? Dr. Pierson Ugol is concerned about primary students maintaining a safe distance and mask wearing. With fewer students there can be more attention to these safety measures.

J. Reilly asked for clarification regarding live teaching. Dr. Pierson Ugol responded that administration is working with the teacher's association. All teachers will be expected to use live streaming a portion of their day for synchronous learning. Details will be worked out at the building level. It is a common expectation for all staff.

J. Chieda shared a concern for the Hybrid model to start the year. Given numbers in Connecticut, she is concerned about a gradual re-entry that has students in for two days and home for five. She prefers to see as much contact time as possible before we may need to return to full remote learning. She asked if the district administration is committed to open fully in October.

Dr. Pierson Ugol responded that the district is committed to returning fully (in consultation with local health officials). The Hybrid allows a slow phase- in for a new way of being.

N. Hammond sees the value of the Hybrid model when considering teaching brand new protocols to 500 students, ages 3-9 years old. Smaller groups will actually support community building.

Fox Santora said that students are generally excited and anxious about a new school year under normal conditions. With smaller groups of students entering into this new approach to school, there will be a sense of calm. When children are learning new protocols, they can be practiced in a friendly, calm manner. They can learn the necessary technology for at-home learning. It will do wonders for building relationships.

Dr. Pierson Ugol would like students to keep their screens at home on the days in which they are in school.

D. Wible asked if there was any talk of looping elementary school students. The response she received was that this arrangement was considered. There is one looping arrangement for fall. She also asked for

more information regarding the Temporary Learn from Home model. Dr. Pierson Ugol stated that more details will be shared. The teacher's union is participating in discussions.

C. Graziano asked for parent survey results, recognizing that the results do not reflect all families. Dr. Pierson Ugol reviewed the results.

Dr. Pierson Ugol shared the need to have accurate numbers (the latest survey-due August 14) in order to create bus runs, set up furniture and adjust class sizes.

H. Whaley supports the Hybrid model. She felt there was a huge discrepancy with Distance Learning and would like to see more time dedicated to preparing for a stronger remote learning experience for students.

J. Chieda continued to share concerns regarding the Hybrid model.

J. Reilly asked about the plans for staff prior to the proposed student start date of September 8th. Dr. Pierson Ugol stated that five days prior to the start date (August 31st) staff will engage in training and curriculum work. Region 9 will begin four days prior to the student start date. No additional days will be added to the teacher contract.

M. D'Agostino stated that the reason the numbers in Connecticut are low is because we are following the guidelines. We all want to be back to school. We need to be mindful that this pandemic is ongoing and there is a predicted second wave. He wishes the district had spent more time enhancing the Distance Learning model when/if we are forced to return to that model. Hallways are generally 6-7 feet apart, perhaps in the high school a little wider. He is concerned that a tape line doesn't give you three feet apart. Are there plans for staggering student traffic in the hallways? M. D'Agostino asked how deep cleaning of the building can occur when staff will be present on Wednesdays.

Dr. Pierson Ugol responded that the passing will be staggered and medical experts state that transient/quick passing is low risk if students are wearing a mask. The initial Hybrid presentation was considering greater health concerns requiring a deep cleaning on Wednesdays. Given current health data, there is no reason why teachers cannot provide distance learning in the morning from school and work with colleagues in open spaces or even virtually in the afternoons. This is not set in stone.

M. Hoffman asked if the survey asked parents why they are not choosing to attend in person schooling. He knows of a small group of students who do not want to attend because they do not want to wear a mask. He requested that the Board allow for Public Comment before the vote.

C. Parkin and H. Whaley agreed that it is hard to interpret the data from the survey. Dr. Pierson Ugol concurred that just over 50% of families responded.

R. Hicks asked if it might be possible to engage in the Hybrid model for less than four weeks. Dr. Pierson Ugol responded that the State allows up to four weeks. Two weeks would only be four days in person.

D. Wible requested more specifics about the plan to improve Distance Learning. Dr. Pierson Ugol responded that over the summer, content leaders, department heads and specialists worked on curriculum

in order to provide general guidance to grade level teams, including resources. Most work will be done when teachers return. She said administration and staff are grateful for the extra days prior to the start of school.

C. Pilato shared that if we anticipate numbers to increase due to school openings, it is wise to open slowly, taking a more cautious approach. If we can get teachers to support this, it is the least worst option available. The future is unknown. Our top priority is to protect the safety and health of our children and trust the experts. She agrees with how the district will proceed.

M. Pampel agrees that safety is first and going in slowly makes sense.

M. Williams agrees, thinking we should go in slowly and carefully.

J. Stinson asked if other districts are following suit, and Dr. Pierson Ugol replied that she now participates in discussions with area superintendents. She doesn't know of other districts that are opening fully. There was talk of trying to offer the same brand of hybrid, but they will differ; the vast majority of area districts are planning something similar to what we have planned. Some are going half days or longer, ultimately transitioning to an All-In model.

C. Pilato added this choice buys us a little time to protect our seniors as we get closer to treatment or a vaccine for the virus.

C. Graziano and M. D'Agostino asked how the week delay will improve the professional development around Distance Learning and bring about more consistency in its delivery. Dr. Pierson Ugol feels that the storm caused a week's loss of communication. This additional time will be offered to teachers to be a part of scheduling, planning and curriculum work before everyone is expected to be fully back. Dr. Pierson Ugol stated that it would also provide time to work with the teacher's association.

Discussion followed regarding the protocol if there are COVID cases in the area, and a review of what reopening models other schools are using.

C. Parkin shared four reasons he is in favor of hybrid because it assumes it is a transitional model (not waiting for health data to get better), it has administration approval, it allows time for our students and staff to learn the new protocols, and it appears other districts are also moving toward this model.

C. Hocker added a fifth reason. There is an important group of institutions that need to work things out, including with the teaching staff. A lot of important details need to be worked out in a less stressful environment.

K. O'Brien stated that given the time to prepare for Distance Learning, the public would expect more consistency - a real structured learning environment and a better opportunity for our students moving forward.

J. Chieda responded that if the goal of the Hybrid model is small classes, is the Hybrid necessary if fewer students are actually returning? D. Wible added that her concern lies with the youngest students who benefit the most from in-person instruction and need the most support at home. Many of these students

may be in daycare settings the other days with potential for added exposure to the virus. Could these students attend four days a week, like preschool, providing more time for getting to know routines, classmates and teachers? N. Hammond shared that given the fluidity of the Temporary Learn from Home model, it is difficult to gauge numbers that can change quickly.

M. D'Agostino, though he hopes he represents his constituents in this discussion, reminded the public to continue to share their thoughts with Board members.

MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education amend the 2020-2021 calendar to postpone the first day for students until September 8, 2020. (Hicks, Chieda). Approved. Unanimous.

MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education amend the 2020-2021 calendar to postpone the first day for students until September 8, 2020. (Hocker, Whaley). Approved, 5-2. Voting for: Parkin, Pilato, Hocker, Oulton, Whaley. Voting against: Hoffman, Reilly.

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education amend the 2020-2021 calendar to postpone the first day for students until September 8, 2020. (O'Brien, Pampel). Approved. Unanimous.

There was discussion but a determination not to include the last day of school in the motion. It was determined that days will be added to the end of the school calendar to make up for the later start. Several other area districts are also postponing the start day.

J. Chieda shared concerns about the first week of school for the Monday/Tuesday cohort; these students will only have one day of school the first week. Perhaps just the first week, the Monday/Tuesday cohort attends on Tuesday/Wednesday (due to Labor Day on Monday). Dr. Pierson Ugol praised the creative thinking, and the idea received positive feedback from the Board and the administration.

J. Parker hopes there is a plan for diagnostic assessments to start the school year.

M. Agostino asked for clarification regarding the teacher's professional development days prior to the school year. Dr. Pierson Ugol stated that staff days will back up to the start of the school year. K-8 staff will begin on August 31st. Barlow staff begins September 1st.

C. Graziano would like more specifics on what Distance Learning will look like at Barlow (including professional development for teachers). T. Johnston stated that he will add that to the agenda of the next Region 9 meeting.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: POLICIES FOR 1st Readings:
6172.61 Distance Learning Plan and 4000.1/5145.44 Title IX Policy

C. Pilato suggested that more be added to this policy in case, in years to come, more documentation of this model is needed. C. Parkin countered that the committee didn't want to box in future administration, stating there are other ways to capture the essence of Distance Learning. J. Stinson added that policies are intended to be clear, brief, and adhere to the law. M. Williams added that regulations go into more detail by design.

Title IX: This is the Board's first reading approval, drafted by CAFE, accelerated because this is legally mandated.

MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education accept policies 6172.61 (Distance Learning Plan) and 4000.1/5145.44 (Title IX Policy) for a first reading. (Hicks, Parker). Approved. Unanimous.

MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education accept policies 6172.61 (Distance Learning Plan) and 4000.1/5145.44 (Title IX Policy) for a first reading. (Reilly, Whaley). Approved. Unanimous.

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policies 6172.61 (Distance Learning Plan) and 4000.1/5145.44 (Title IX Policy) for a first reading. (Williams, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: POLICIES FOR 2nd READING: 4118.237 FACE MASKS COVERINGS

Edits to the policy since the first reading were reviewed. M. O'Brien asked if a student is exempt from wearing a mask, does the student use a facial shield. Dr. Pierson Ugol stated that consulted medical experts could not think of a medical reason not to wear a mask and still be able to attend school. These are going to the very few who cannot wear a mask, a few noted exceptions: due to sensory issues, a burn, or a serious dermatological condition. In these cases, the nurse will work with the family to determine other safety provisions including facial shields and additional protections for staff.

MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education accept policy 4118.237 (Face Mask Coverings) for a second reading and adopt it as effective immediately. (Goldstein, Chieda). Approved. Unanimous.

MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education accept policy 4118.237 (Face Mask Coverings) for a second reading and adopt it as effective immediately. (Oulton, Reilly). Approved. 6-1. Voting for: Parkin, Pilato, Reilly, Oulton, Whaley, Hocker. Voting against: Hoffman.

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy 4118.237 (Face Mask Coverings) for a second reading and adopt it as effective immediately. (O'Brien, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Krista Zilberg, Easton - Communication from Special Education leadership has been vague though she understands they are awaiting more guidance from the State. Ms. Del Conte and Ms. DiBartolo need additional support.

Brenda Phelps, Indian Hill Road, Redding - (in an email read by J. Reilly) Hopes that all synchronous lessons are taped so students can engage in the lessons at other times.

Jeff Fligelman, Pocahontas Road, Redding - Thanked the Boards, administration and staff and offered a warm welcome to Dr. Harrison.

Angela Caes, Deer Hill Road, Redding - Concerned about class size: 23 in grade 3. She would like the rationale for this decision. She asked what are the shortfalls in the budget? What platforms are going to be used for Distance Learning and at what cost?

Tracy Carlucci - Thanks everyone for their hard work on this task. Welcome and congratulations to Dr. Harrison. She is upset about the Temporary Learning from Home option at the elementary level particularly. There will be little access to teachers and classmates and no specials, leaving students feeling less a part of the classroom community. It sounds like live streaming will only be one way. With approximately 24% families choosing this option, she hopes improvements can be made.

Alison Bonoff, Gregory Farm Road, Easton - Welcomed Dr. Harrison and asked how Watertown is re-opening this fall. She wished the administration had asked the public their opinion on the reopening. She has not heard how the public will know if the planned professional development was effective and suggests it is best to ask parents. She is concerned that the first and last hour of the day at the middle school does not focus on core subjects at a time when this is critical.

Joe Paczek, Reilly Road, Easton - Welcomed the new Superintendent and asked for an update on buses.

Pamela Friedman, Goodridge Rd, Redding - She asked for the final decision regarding disinfecting buses (the frequency). She also inquired about morning drop off for parents with multiple children at the elementary school. How can students arrive on time if parents need to drop off their children in more than one location?

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT:

The Boards collectively welcomed Dr. Harrison. They are so pleased that he is able to assume the position at the end of this month; there is so much work to be done.

R. Hicks shared concerns about diminished student-teacher time and how the hybrid model impacts instructional time. He suggested the Boards give more consideration to this at a later date.

C. Hocker thanked Dr. Pierson Ugol as interim superintendent. He also wanted to thank Scott Reiss who has done a wonderful job.

M. D'Agostino thanked Dr. Harrison for his interest in our district and said tonight is as complicated as it gets.

H. Whaley thanked everyone for their comments and reminded the public that the Board can advise the Superintendent, but it is ultimately the Superintendent's decision.

D. Wible shared that this model is all new for teachers, the research is just emerging, we need to support professional development and we need to bring in trained professionals.

J. Chieda stated when a system is under pressure, it shows the leaks which, in this case, is the need for additional staff and resources (for example: leadership in technology). If the system was not so stressed, perhaps there would not be the communication and follow-up concerns that were voiced this evening.

C. Parkin thanked all the Board members.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION: move that the Easton Board of Education meeting be adjourned. (Hicks, Wible).
Approved. Unanimous.**

**MOTION: move that the Redding Board of Education meeting be adjourned. (Hoffman, Reilly).
Approved. Unanimous.**

MOTION: move that the Region 9 Board of Education meeting be adjourned. (O'Brien, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 p.m.

Recorded by
Elizabeth Rimkunas

Submitted by
Juliette Berry, Secretary, Region 9 Board of Education