

Filed subject to approval

EASTON, REDDING & REGION 9 JOINT BOARDS OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons
May 23, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

On YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRtQ6dze5a8x5XT5LzBnDHA>

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Easton: Hicks, Parker, Wible, deJesus, Stinson, Young

Redding: Parkin, Hoffman, Belfatto, Gibbons, Sadana, Shanahan; Oulton via remote

Region 9: D'Agostino, Johnston, O'Brien, Graziano, Denny, Lehberger, Pampel, Thompson

Administration: McKinnon, Pierson Ugol, Scrofani, Bradbury

Others: 4 members of the public, and the recording secretary.

CALL TO ORDER

R. Hicks called the Easton Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

C. Parkin called the Redding Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

M. D'Agostino called the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anne Manusky, Morning Glory Lane, Easton, voiced her opposition to a 10th grade health lesson at JBHS. She said that she had also written to Dr. McKinnon and M. D'Agostino about it.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

J. Stinson said that he wanted everyone to be aware that there's an epidemic of student-athlete injuries. He said that we should all think about how we bolster and encourage our athletes to work out.

M. D'Agostino said that the District is in need of more Recording Secretaries.

S. Lehberger said that the "Hunchback of Notre Dame" performance was phenomenal and thanked everyone who was involved with the play. She also thanked the JBHS school counselors and suggested that everyone go view the gratitude tree in the main lobby.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION

J. Parker explained that the following Motions were a requirement from the State of Connecticut.

Motion: Move that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Easton Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not

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limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. (Parker, Stinson). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Redding Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. (Gibbons, Shanahan). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Region 9 Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. (Johnston, O'Brien). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. (Parker, Stinson). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and

debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. (Sdana, Gibbons). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. (O’Brien, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jason McKinnon said that at tonight’s meeting Central Office staff would be highlighting a few elements of the work that’s continuing after the budget has been passed and the Strategic Plan has been further developed. He spoke about the Communications Plan as one of the strategic priorities, saying that it’s essential for a two-way dialogue within our districts and that it’s important to have a clear and reliable message being sent out from the District. Dr. McKinnon reviewed the four beliefs and three guiding principles within the Communications Plan, and said that based on them, they were able to establish the five priorities of: engage, promote, cultivate, streamline and manage & plan. He said that results from a survey sent to all three district communities about communication garnered over 700 responses and has resulted in an upcoming slight change and streamlining in the way the three districts will communicate with the community - no more 5:00 a.m. phone calls. Dr. McKinnon explained the “Chain of Communication” page added to the website that details guidelines about who to contact within the District regarding various issues and concerns.

Dr. McKinnon previewed the new E/R/R9 website, saying that: it is aligned to ER9CommunicationsPlan.org; it is modern and has a user friendly interface; it has improved navigation and accessibility; it has a responsive design; it has social media integration; it has improved calendars; it allows for the sharing of student success and celebration of experiences; and, easy updating is available. Director of Digital Learning, Jeff Bradbury, gave a more detailed presentation of the new website and explained the “finger graphics,” that serve as quick links to the Curriculum Plan, Strategic Plan and Budget pages within the website. J. Bradbury said that the new website is completely innovative, not only in a visual sense, but also, as a messenger platform to meet the needs of the District and to help tell the story of students, staff and the community. He said that the new website will be live on July 1.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Stephanie Pierson Ugol, gave a presentation on the Curriculum Plan 2023-2028 and utilized the District’s new website in her presentation. She first said that this work had started in the 2019-2020 school year, but was stalled for obvious reasons in early 2020. Dr. Pierson Ugol said the Central Office leadership team is at a point of innovation and cohesion

and that it is terrific to be back doing this exciting work. The presentation included the eight sections of: Vision & Mission, Equity & Inclusion; Curriculum Plan Overview; Curriculum Development; Purpose of a Review & Development Plan; Instruction; Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Curriculum Writing and Instruction; Curriculum Development Process; and, Next Steps. BOE members had questions regarding: timeline/cycle for curriculum review; will the middle school program of studies be available on-line; how does a government entity affect our curriculum; and, is a five-year cycle an industry standard at high-performing schools. Dr. Pierson Ugol responded: in most cases it is a five-year cycle; yes, the middle school program of studies will be on the website; sometimes the State will have a new mandate that the District needs to respond to immediately; and, yes, a five-year cycle is standard for high-performing schools.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Dr. McKinnon said that as a result of Strategic Priority 4.10, special education focus groups were conducted in February - April and resulted in a draft of special education priorities. He said these priorities are: Leadership & System; Communication & Family Engagement; Learning Environment & Special Programs; and Operations. To work towards these priorities, Dr. McKinnon presented a plan for restructuring the leadership of the Special Education Department: one Director of Special Education for the three districts, one Supervisor of Special Education for each of the three districts, one administrative assistant for each of the three districts and one Special Education Accountant for the three districts. Dr. McKinnon presented a financial plan for the restructuring and said that since the current Director of Special Education for Easton/Redding is resigning at the end of the school year, the timing is right to make these changes.

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to proceed with the reorganization of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Special Education Departments with the hiring of an ER9 Director of Special Services for preK-12. (Stinson, Wible). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to proceed with the reorganization of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Special Education Departments with the hiring of an ER9 Director of Special Services for preK-12. (Hoffman, Sadana). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to proceed with the reorganization of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Special Education Departments with the hiring of an ER9 Director of Special Services for preK-12. (Graziano, Pampel). Approved. Unanimous.

It was decided that two members from each BOE will serve on the Search Committee for the Director of Special Education position.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: REGIONALIZATION PATHWAYS

C. Parkin gave a slide presentation on the possibility of an Easton/Redding/Region 9 regionalization that included: limitations of the current three-district structure; benefits of a single ER9 District; a plan to get to a regionalized district; financial benefits to regionalization; and, possible next steps. A discussion followed that included: agreement among some BOE members in concept; how to negotiate the contracts of the various collective bargaining units; this would be a defensive move; legislative action would be necessary; how will town residents react; debt issues of the three districts; and, not wanting the issue to take away from the educational concerns and work of the BOEs. It was decided that more research was needed and then a committee could be formed to consider the E/R/R9 regionalization.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: CENTRAL OFFICE CONTRACTS

J. Stinson reported that the ER9 Joint Negotiating Committee recently met and decided to continue with the traditional contract structure of three-years, with a one-year renewal, and that some benefits were taken off the table. M. D'Agostino added that the consensus was to provide a 2.5% salary increase for Central Office contracts - although a new hire did not require a salary increase; a 3% salary increase for S. Scrofani; and, an annuity for the Superintendent.

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education move to Executive Session to discuss Central Office compensation and invite Dr. McKinnon to attend. (Stinson, Wible). Approved. Unanimous. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education move to Executive Session to discuss Central Office compensation and invite Dr. McKinnon to attend. (Hoffman, Shanahan). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education move to Executive Session to discuss Central Office compensation and invite Dr. McKinnon to attend. (Graziano, O'Brien). Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting moved to Executive Session at 10:00 p.m.

The meeting moved out of Executive Session at 10:07 p.m.

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education ratify the terms of the contract with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Finance, Operations & Technology and authorize the Board Chairs to sign the contracts. (Stinson, Wible). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education ratify the terms of the contract with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Finance, Operations & Technology and authorize the Board Chairs to sign the contracts. (Sadana, Gibbons). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education ratify the terms of the contract with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Finance, Operations & Technology and authorize the Board Chairs to sign the contracts. (Graziano, Pampel). Approved. Unanimous.

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education add a new Agenda Item IV of Chartwells Contract, and move down all other items in the Agenda. (Wible, Stinson). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education add a new Agenda Item IV of Chartwells Contract, and move down all other items in the Agenda. (Sadana, Hoffman). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education add a new Agenda Item IV of Chartwells Contract, and move down all other items in the Agenda. (Graziano, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.

JOINT BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEI Task Force: D. Wible reported that they recently had a good meeting that focused on professional development in the school buildings and Central Office for next year, and that they also discussed the topic of SEL in the District.

Curriculum Committee: D. Wible said that there will be a Curriculum Committee meeting on June 6.

CHARTWELLS CONTRACT

Motion: Move that the Easton Board of Education extend the Chartwells contract under the same terms for one more year, 2023-2024. (Stinson, deJesus). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education extend the Chartwells contract under the same terms for one more year, 2023-2024. (Hoffman, Belfatto). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education extend the Chartwells contract under the same terms for one more year, 2023-2024. (Lehberger, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

D. Wible said that on June 1, Easton Pride will hold their Flag Raising Ceremony at Easton Town Hall at 4:00 p.m.

K. O'Brien said that the Easton Learning Foundation will hold its golf tournament on June 6; she said that people can sign-up for the tournament on-line.

C. Parkin read a prepared statement which said, in sum: it's the first school year in a while where we've had relative stability, and I want to commend Dr. McKinnon for his leadership to get us here this year and the work of all 21 of us as we start to plan toward a strategic plan and some examples of normalcy in our district.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Parker and Wible from the Easton Board of Education; Gibbons and Hoffman from the Redding Board of Education; and Graziano and Pample from the Region 9 Board of Education all made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections, R. Hicks, C. Parkin and M. D'Agostino deemed the meeting adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Submitted by Karen O'Brien
Secretary, Region 9 Board of Education

Recorded by,
Sarah Ota