

*Filed subject to approval*

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING  
Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons  
January 28, 2020- 7:30 p.m.  
Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board members: Johnston, Graziano, Berry, D'Agostino, Denny, Williams, Pampel

Absent: O'Brien

Administration: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Reiss, Pin, McTague, Santangeli, Roszko, DeAngelo, Desmarais, Panos, Schemm, Angell, Czudak

Student Representative: Max Monson

Others: 20 members of the public and staff

Mr. Johnston called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. D'Agostino requested revisions to the January 21, 2020 minutes.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 2, 2020 Special Meeting as submitted (Williams, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the amended minutes of the January 21, 2020 Easton, Redding, Region 9 Joint Boards of Education regular meeting (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved, 6-0. (Williams abstained).**

STUDENT COMMENT

Max Monson - Upcoming Coffee House will feature student performances February 8th - Barlow is hosting the CT STEM Fair, 7AM. Black and Gold Day - a day to decompress/review for exams -went well.

Ms. Graziano asked for feedback regarding homework assigned over break. M. Monson responded that the workload was manageable; teachers did not wait to assign more homework over the longer than usual holiday break.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Tremont (student), 10 Tatetuck Trail, Easton

Spoke in support of continuing the Latin program at Barlow; studying Latin is important to those preparing for college.

Ben Fligelman (Student - President of the Class of 2022), Pocahontas Road, Redding  
Understands the Board's reasons for considering cuts of low enrollment courses, however, he asked the Board to continue the Latin program in order to keep up with neighboring communities thereby maintaining Barlow's high standards. Students who began this course of study must have the opportunity to complete four years of study (the requirement of many selective colleges.)

Jamie Barickman, Church Hill Lane, Redding  
Seeks the support of a relaunch of the Redding Pilot which has not been published since 2018. This publication would be for the community by the community. Already student journalists at Barlow have volunteered. Mr. Barickman also spoke in support of the Latin program. He finds it disturbing that cutting the program would be a consideration; it's not compatible with the mission of the schools to encourage intellectual curiosity.

Elizabeth Gray (student), Lonetown Road, Redding  
Ms. Elizabeth Gray has committed five years to Latin study and feels very strongly that the program continues. Colleges require 3-4 years of a language. Top schools require 4 years of a language.

Virginia Gray (student), Lonetown Road, Redding  
Ms. Virginia Gray shared concerns that the Board may consider taking away the Latin program. She shared concerns regarding college requirements of 3-4 years of a language.

Jeff Fligelman, Pocahontas Road, Redding  
At the state-wide Latin Day, Barlow's team came in first. All DRG A schools offer Latin; seventeen out of twenty DRG B schools teach Latin. Mr. Fligelman believes we have a moral obligation to the current Latin students to continue the program. He asks that the Board consider that enrollment will rise again so cutting programs in response to declining enrollment is not a sound decision. He requests that the Board look elsewhere for cuts in order to maintain a school of Barlow's caliber. Most colleges want to see three years of the same language and the more selective colleges want to see four years.

Carol Murray, Sport Hill Road, Easton  
Ms. Murray advocated for the Latin program stating that Latin never really died, rather it evolved into the romance languages. Latin prepares students for professions. Furthermore, the most influential literary pieces were first written in Latin. She asks that the Board carefully make this decision. If Latin is to be cut, the Board must carefully consider the alternatives for current students.

Catherine Vecchiarelli, Great Meadow, Redding  
Ms. Vecchiarelli stated that the proposed position of Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel comes with a large sticker price. She raises the question: Have we done due diligence vetting candidates for this position to defend the cost to the community and the Board of Finance?

Mathias Galban (student), Redding Road, Redding

Stated that Latin increases a student's chance of getting into a good college. He shared that he recently received a vocabulary workbook in a different class; the goal of the workbook is to increase SAT vocabulary. He believes he has an edge as a Latin student.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mrs. Graziano thanked the public who shared. She attended a meeting to launch the Redding Pilot. She spoke in support of Google Meeting as a platform that can move some Board business faster.

Mr. D'Agostino thanked the public and students. He shared the challenging job the Board faces when making decisions regarding courses with low enrollment. He stated that he fought for the Latin program having experienced first-hand (his own children) the benefits. He encouraged those who support sustaining the Latin program to encourage students to enroll.

Mr. Johnston thanked the speakers for their enthusiastic support of the Latin program. In addition, he is interested in learning how the other boards in the tri-district are effectively using social media. He will put this topic on a future agenda.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education recess to an Executive Session to discuss the following: Interview Special Education Director and invite Jennifer Del Conte and Thomas McMorran (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.**

Return to Public Session for Possible Action on Discussed Item in Executive Session.

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 9:21 p.m.  
No further action.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Director of Finance & Operations: Scott Reiss reported two transfer of funds:

1. Request to transfer \$14,314.05 from General Instruction - Certified Salary (account 1100-111) to Central Administration (account 2320-999) to provide funds for the upgrade of the Phoenix HR/Payroll/Financial System to eFinancePlus. This cost will be distributed by all 3 districts.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the transfer of funds (\$14,314.04) from General Instruction-Certified Salary (1100-111) to Central Administration (2320-999), (D'Agostino, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

2. Request to transfer \$70,025.19 from Special Education - Tuition - Private School (account 1200-563) to Special Education - Transportation (account 1200-510). Due to changes in student needs, additional transportation is required. The change also affected the tuition account, providing sufficient funds to cover the additional transportation costs.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the transfer of funds (\$70,025.19) from Special Education - Tuition-Private School (1200-563) to Special Education - Transportation (1200-510), (D'Agostino, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

#### BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Williams stated that the Policy Committees continue to meet.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

Lauren Davis from RSM-Audit shared that the audit was completed, and they will issue opinions. She stated that there were no surprises noted in the audit. There is no debt issue; everything is consistent. She thanked Mr. Reiss for facilitating the process and stated that RSM-Audit is happy to serve the region. Mr. D'Agostino asked Ms. Davis to briefly share the audit process with new members of the Board.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the 2018-2019 financial report, based on the recommendation of the Audit Committee (D'Agostino, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE  
Nothing material to report. More information will be provided at the next meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE LIST AND MEETING SCHEDULES

Mr. D'Agostino stated the Board does not need to provide approval. He requested that Mr. Johnston read the names of the Board members who serve on committees. Mr. Johnston complied. Mrs. Graziano requested that the Curriculum and Budget Committees follow the same schedule.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the committee schedules as presented (D'Agostino, Williams). Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: PRESENTATION OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PORTION OF THE 2020-2021 BUDGET

Ms. Roszko and Mr. DeAngelo presented. Joel Barlow complies with state and federal requirements, providing meaningful and maximum benefit for students while being mindful of costs. The goal of special education remains independence for students in the least restrictive placement; this often means a co-teaching environment. The most expensive is out of district placements. A larger number of special education students are coming to JBHS next year. The proposed budget for next year indicates a -0.9 percent change whereby last year's budget saw a -8.82 percent change. There are currently 123 students with IEP's (including in district and those with out of district placements.)

The following are budget requests for 2020-21:

- 1 full time staff to Bridge services
- Adding a 0.5 Orton-Gillingham Certified Teacher (share this position with Easton and Redding)

- Reassigning 1 teacher from 3E Program to Certified Transition Coordinator Position (current personnel retiring at the end of the year)

The presenters shared the vision for expanding the responsibilities of the role of Transition Coordinator.

The role of Case Manager was explained. They are responsible for IEP delivery. In addition, they teach five periods a day; liaison with general education teachers; progress monitor; participate in numerous PPT's; develop IEP's; and conduct evaluations. Caseloads have grown over the last three years. Mr. D'Angelo does not want to exceed 18 students on a given Case Manager's load. In fact, the Teacher of the Visually Impaired has been able to serve as Case Manager for other students as he/she holds Special Education certification.

The presenters shared a slide detailing the projected levels of service delivery. The majority of students are receiving less than 4 hours of services per week. The purpose for sharing this data is to highlight how the Special Education department values independence, providing no more services than a student needs in order to be successful.

It was observed that students with IEP's were not accessing some of the higher level math courses. The presenters were pleased to share that more students with IEP's were participating in Algebra, Geometry and Algebra II. The co-taught math model provides access and equity to students. Regular education students benefit from the co-taught model as well.

Attendance is growing in Bridge Services; therefore, the team is looking to fund a full time teacher next year. To understand the value of providing the Bridge Services, the following costs were shared:

Per pupil cost (ER9) = \$23, 703

Average cost of Bridges = \$43,477

Average cost of outplacement: estimated \$68,735 + transportation (\$20,000 - \$45,000)

Bridges also keeps students close to peers, close to home and close to teachers.

Mr. D'Agostino and Mr. Johnston asked the Special Education administrators if they can project further into the future. Do they foresee a cohort coming that will mean a significant increase? Knowing this ahead of time will be helpful. The team responded that it is difficult to predict, given the number of students who are exiting special education.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: RIGHTSIZING VISIBLE THINKING COST ANALYSIS PROJECTIONS

Dr. Pin stated that the following presentation represents a year of work. It is a dense presentation that may be better presented at date in the near future, in its entirety. The Board agreed. This will not be a budget presentation rather a look at historical enrollment: where does the high school staff see it going? Where do they see reductions? Which programs will be examined? This presentation needs to be viewed prior to the February meeting therefore a date was determined: Thursday January 30, 2020 at 7:30PM at JBHS.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: THE SEAL OF BILITERACY

No discussion.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education meeting be adjourned (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 p.m.

Recorded by,  
Elizabeth Rimkunas

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