

Filed Subject to Approval

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

January 19, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.

Virtually via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/94985106824?pwd=eG4vNmExNDVnajZwck5ldHZBNXpnUT09>

Meeting ID: 949 8510 6824 - Passcode: 234761

One tap mobile: +16465588656,,94985106824#,,, *234761# US (New York)

Dial by your location: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 949 8510 6824

Passcode: 234761

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Johnston, Graziano, Berry, D'Agostino, Denny, O'Brien, Pampel, Williams

Administration: Harrison, Pierson Ugol, Zachary, Pin

Others: 10 members of the public

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Johnston called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the December 15, 2020 Region 9 Board of Education regular meeting were reviewed.

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2020 Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting. (D'Agostino, O'Brien). Approved, 7-0.

STUDENT COMMENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Drew Luca, Fire Hill Road, Redding spoke about his concerns regarding some teachers at JBHS expressing political and religious opinions and sharing them with students. Mr. Luca said that this is inappropriate in the school setting and requests that administration follow up on his concerns.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None

REPORTS

A. Administrative Reports

- Superintendent: Dr. Harrison spoke about his concerns regarding students beginning the “All-In” learning model. He is impressed with the students’ ability to think critically and appreciates the staff and their hard work. Dr. Harrison thanked Mr. Luca for bringing up his concerns.
- Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Pierson Ugol about the change in the use of core textbooks beginning at the elementary school level in Region 9. The textbook is part of the math curriculum and is changing to Envision. Dr. Pierson Ugol said that this text uses more technology and the approach is modified and she does not expect students to have difficulty adjusting.
- Director of Finance: Mr. Zachary spoke about health insurance claims being lower than usual. He said that the Budget Object Summary report is in transition but expects to review it at next month's meeting. Mr. D’Agostino asked about costs for PPE in the amount of \$259,000.00 and requested that Mr. Zachary review this as it is an additional expenditure in the original budget. Mr. Zachary said we can expect state reimbursement funds that will offset the cost of the PPE. Mr. Johnston asked about flooding repair project and Mr. Czudak reported final invoices are in process of being completed.
- Building Administrator Reports: Dr. Pin reported that Alexandra Popescu was awarded a scholarship from Regeneron. In addition, JBHS was awarded \$2,000.00 to be used for scientific research. She said that all club activities were working well in the online format. Today was the opening day for winter sports. Dr. Pin provided an update on cohorts, or more accurately called “tracks”. She provided a handout that indicates the most current numbers of students in each cohort. The cohorts are a combination of online and in person learning, and cohort C is fully online. Dr. Pin said all students learn differently and having a choice about joining the cohort that best meets their needs is important. Dr. Pin identified two areas at JBHS where additional support is needed. One area is the need to address students' social and emotional needs. Second, is to request substitute teachers assist regular teachers with hall monitoring. She suggests the substitute teachers to be hired for the remainder of this school year to carry out the task of hall monitoring in order to allow regular staff to provide academics. Dr. Pin spoke about diversity and equity inclusion.
- Director of Special Services: Mr. DiStefano spoke about the 3-E and Bridges program and is pleased about its success. He said he collaborates weekly with Ms. Del Conte regarding supports and services for each district. Mr. DiStefano reports that Rebecca Hoyt is the staff member of the month and thanks her for all of her hard work.

B. Board of Education Committee Reports

- Policy: Ms. Williams discussed computer programs with regard to privacy policies. The committee plans to look into this policy more thoroughly.

- Pension: Ms. Graziano spoke about the completed audit. The audit will be formally reviewed at the January 26, 2021 meeting and will be available to the public.

MOTION: Move to add agenda item for consideration of administration requests for additional staffing at JBHS and create a new item A. under Discussion and Possible Action in this meeting's agenda. (Williams, Denny). Approved, 7-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL STAFFING AT JBHS

Dr. Pin suggested initiation of discussion regarding the addition of two areas for support at JBHS.

Dr. Pin spoke about how students could benefit from additional social/emotional support. Mr. DiStefano explained that DBT consultants could be hired to support students in this area. Dr. Pin said that the service would be for all students including special education students. Ms. Panos agreed that there is a need for this type of support to the students. Mr. Zachary said he would review the budget regarding funding for DBT consultants.

Dr. Pin said the cost for a supervisory substitute to assume the duties of hall monitor for the remainder of the school year would be \$9,688.50. This would enable teachers to continue uninterrupted in their academic duties with the addition of a supervisory substitute.

MOTION: Move to continue to use budget funds for substitute teachers to be hired to assist teachers with additional responsibilities imposed by COVID-19 such as hallway monitoring at JBHS. (Graziano, Williams). Approved, 7-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: TIMING AND LOGISTICS FOR RETURN TO AN ALL-IN LEARNING MODEL

Dr. Harrison spoke about health data related to COVID-19, class density, and class logistics. He said that COVID-19 numbers need to be considered when determining the availability of seats in the classroom. Dr. Harrison concluded that the best learning model for now is hybrid learning. The goal of the district is for All-In by February 1, 2021. A review of current health data is needed before the final decision.

Dr. Pin shared a presentation: "Visible Thinking Decision Making about Barlow's Future".

Ms. McTague provided a PowerPoint presentation that is available on the ER9 website.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM: PARKING FEES FOR SEMESTER TWO

Dr. Pin spoke about parking fees for the second semester with the amount to charge in question due to the COVID situation and resulting reduced student time on campus.

Dr. Pin provided a handout showing how student parking fees are spent in the budget. Following board member discussion, it was decided that if the student has already paid \$75.00, they do not

have to pay an additional at \$75.00 for the rest of this school year. If the student has not yet paid for parking, he/she will owe \$75.00 that will cover parking for this remaining school year.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: CSDE AUTHORIZED SIGNERS OF THE ED-099 AGREEMENT FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

MOTION: Move to authorize Clarence Zachary to be an authorized signer of CSDE for the ED-099 Child Nutrition Program. (O'Brien, Graziano). Approved, 7-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: BOARD MEMBER PERSPECTIVES FOR BUDGET PLANNING

Mr. Johnston asked board members for their comments regarding the upcoming budget. Mr. D'Agostino asked that board members carefully consider items before adding them to the budget. He said Region 9 will have three meetings to formulate the new budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alexis Bennett, Gallows Hill Road, Redding said that she found the DBT topic of tonight's board meeting very interesting. She spoke about how the skills the students learn as a result of the consultants helping teachers and staff integrate this into the school day, is invaluable.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move to adjourn Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting. (O'Brien, Williams). Approved, 7-0.

The Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting was adjourned at 11:38 p.m.

Recorded by,
Deborah DeLorenzo

Submitted by,
Juliette Berry