

Regular Meeting
REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
December 21, 2021 – 7:30 p.m.

****IN PERSON****

Joel Barlow High School Library Learning Commons
100 Black Rock Turnpike, Redding, CT
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpOKinELAtzbYQcJ5NA3-hg>

MASKS REQUIRED

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board members: Johnston, D'Agostino, Graziano, Pampel, Denny, Williams, O'Brien, Lehberger
Administration: McKinnon, Almeida, Pierson-Ugol, Petruzzelli
Student Representative: Griffin Ellis

T. Johnston called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm

(note: set-up of new AV equipment in Learning Commons was not complete so live YouTube recording did not work. Meeting was videotaped and will be uploaded on the ER9 website.)

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: move to appoint Jason McKinnon as temporary chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (D'Agostino, O'Brien) Approved - Unanimous.

Motion: move to nominate Cheryl Graziano Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (O'Brien, Lehberger).

Motion: move to nominate Mike D'Agostino Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (Denny, Pampel).

Motion: move to appoint Mike D'Agostino Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (Denny, Pampel). Approved (5-3).

Motion: move to nominate Todd Johnston Vice Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (Denny, Pampel).

Motion: move to nominate Cheryl Graziano Vice Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (O'Brien, Lehberger).

Motion: move to appoint Todd Johnston as Vice Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (Denny, Pampel). Approved (5-3).

Motion: move to appoint Karen O'Brien Secretary of Region 9 Board of Education (Graziano, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to appoint Cheryl Graziano as Treasurer of Region 9 (Lehberger, Denny). Approved (7-1 abstention - C. Graziano).

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the November 16, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following corrections:

- Mary Lee to Gwen**
- Devon Wible (spelling correction)**
- Change estimating bonding and permit fees from \$16,000 to \$1600 from the state program (Pampel, Denny) approved - unanimous.**

STUDENT COMMENT

Student representative, Griffin Ellis discussed happenings at Joel Barlow: Four students from Joel Barlow High School were selected to participate in the prestigious CT Music Educators Assoc. Western Region Music Festival. Two seniors have been nationally recognized for Art and Photography. The Barlow Debate team finished 1, 2, 3, and 5th place at a statewide competition. In sports, JBHS was once again awarded the prestigious "Michael's Cup," in recognition of their exemplary sportsmanship across all sports programs. The Barlow Baseball team recently participated in a community service project by cleaning up senior citizens yards in Redding. The JB boys' soccer coach Paul Winstanley was selected as 2021 Coach of the Year. This is a prestigious award that continues the legacy of JB soccer. Special thanks to Asst. Coach Jim Dolan and all the students and support staff involved in the program. Additionally, the recent PJ Day organized by the '24 Class Council raised over \$800 for the CT Children's Medical Center. Shoe and clothing drives continue until Jan 4. Griffin expressed his desire to improve communication between students, staff, the BOE and Community, in his capacity as student representative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

The Board welcomed new member Kathy Thompson to the Region 9 Board of Education.

K. O'Brien thanked all the teachers and staff and community for participating in the recent Easton Learning Foundation holiday auction which raised over \$15,000 for teacher grants at JBHS and Easton schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. J. McKinnon thanked all members of the Board for accepting leadership positions.

Head of School & Assistant Superintendent: Dr. M. Almeida reported on the COVID situation at Joel Barlow High School. Many students have been reported as close contacts of positive cases. He is strongly urging parents to keep students home if they are ill and reminding families to be extra vigilant during the holidays.

Director of Finance & Operations: S. Petruzzelli reported on budget transfers. For clarification, M. D'Agostino reviewed BOE policy regarding budget transfers.

A \$21,000 transfer is needed for the in-house instructional needs of a Special education student. The student is now able to be accommodated at Joel Barlow High School instead of being outplaced so there is a net overall savings. A transfer for \$105,196 needs to occur due to a technical error of the referenced line item being reported in the wrong budget area. In future S. Petruzzelli will provide a written summary of transactions prior to presenting them at the BOE meeting.

Motion to transfer funds of \$21,000 and \$105,196 as reported by S. Petruzzelli. (Johnston, Lehberger) Approved. Unanimous.

Assistant Superintendent: Dr. S. Pierson-Ugol reported on the new Director of Technology & Digital Learning, Sara Scrofani's efforts to update the online JBHS Program of Studies. Gave BOE a visual presentation of the new online POS. Now more user friendly for students and families, better visuals and eventually will be adding videos to give a flavor of the Barlow experience. The new POS will allow students to view a 4 year plan for their JB education. This provides a more seamless process for parents, students, and teachers. She thanked the K-12 Curriculum Steering Comm. and expressed gratitude to all involved in moving this program forward.

K. Thompson thanked the staff for their efforts and said that her JBHS student had already used the platform and that it was very user friendly.

J. McKinnon presented ideas on revising the budget planning process. This included simplifying the "categories" or budget object codes to make it more streamlined. He stated that the budget should be organized by cost centers and presented "thematically." He noted the unique needs of the district being a tri-board, emphasizing that simplifying the process will help to better understand the budget and make it more "user friendly."

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: AGENDA MODIFICATION

M. D'Agostino asked for motion to add/amend the agenda - adding two items.

Motion: move to modify agenda under section VIII - add 2020-2021 "unspent funds" becomes item (A). Item (B) becomes Approval of 2022 Proposed Meeting Schedule. Item (C) Review Invoice for HVAC and added item (D) Committee reports. All other items moved to E. F. G. correspondingly. (Graziano, Denny) Approved - Unanimous.

S. Petruzzelli reviewed the unspent funds and the accounts where the unspent monies originated from. The majority of the funds were unspent due to COVID related expenditures being less than anticipated for bus transportation, professional services, fewer outplaced students, unexpended SPED funds, and retirements of long tenured staff. Petruzzelli also reviewed a few accounts which were over-budget such as cleaning supplies and technology (iPads) related to COVID and distance learning expenditures. Additionally, BOE members were seeking clarification on the Healthcare Reimbursement Fund. Discussion followed. M. D'Agostino stated the only option for the unspent funds is to return the money to the towns. The 2021 unspent fund balance is \$607,669.61

Motion: move to return 2020-2021 unspent funds \$607,669.61 to the towns of Easton and Redding according to the apportionment of the 2020-2021 budget. (Johnston, Graziano) Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF 2022 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

**Motion: move to approve the 2022 proposed Region 9 Board Meeting schedule. (Denny, Lehberger).
Approved - Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: REVIEW OF FINAL INVOICE FOR HVAC AND GYMNASIUM CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. PROJECT IS COMPLETE - RECEIVED CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY FROM THE TOWN OF REDDING BUILDING DEPT.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the final invoice for the HVAC Gymnasium Campus Improvement Project, Invoice #1110-5 from Millennium Builders for the amount of \$150,000.03 as final payment. For a total project cost of \$856,061.03, (\$1,657 under budget). Instruct the Director of Finance to pay the invoice from the Capital Reserve Fund. (Denny, O'Brien) Approved - unanimous.

Motion: move to have the Region 9 Board of Education to disband the JBHS Cafeteria and HVAC Gymnasium Campus Improvement Plan Committee as the project has been successfully completed. (O'Brien, Lehberger) Approved - Unanimous.

Mike expressed his gratitude to everyone on the aforementioned committee for getting this project done on time and under budget despite the difficulties imposed by COVID and supply chain issues.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: GRANT FROM NASA FOR \$5,000 AWARDED TO THE JBHS FIRST ROBOTICS TEAM.

Motion to approve the NASA \$5000 grant to JBHS Robotics team. (O'Brien, Graziano). The board accepted with Gratitude. Approved - unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: GRANT FROM THE REDDING RUNNERS CLUB \$5,000 AWARDED TO THE JBHS ROBOTICS TEAM

Motion to approve the \$5000 grant from the Redding Runners Club to the JBHS Robotics team. (Graziano, Denny). The board accepted with Gratitude. Approved - Unanimous

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: THE WELLER FOUNDATION GENEROUSLY DONATED \$500 TO JBHS LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW BOOKS.

Motion: move to approve and accept with gratitude the \$500 donation to JBHS from the Weller Foundation. (Lehberger, Denny). Approved - Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS

C. Graziano reported the Audit committee is now able to close out the Region 9 audit (by P.K.F. O'Connor-Davies) and will be able to file reports by the end of January. Additionally, the committee met with (NawrockiSmith), to define the scope of the Region 9 Central Office forensic audit.

K. O'Brien reported on the Wellness Committee meeting at JBHS with Food Services. Thanked D. Kennedy and all the food services staff for their hard work and efforts to maintain excellent food and nutritional quality in light of ongoing staffing and supply chain difficulties.

M. D'Agostino updated on the Facilities and Fields committee. The committee is aware of and has addressed the water contamination issue. Additionally, a non-functioning well pump needs to be replaced, it may have been hit by lightning. This cost is estimated at \$6,973.

Motion: move to instruct administration to purchase a new well pump, funded through the operating budget. (Denny, Pampel) Approved - Unanimous.

M. D'Agostino expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the BOE and staff for all that was done to provide quality instruction and safety for students and staff throughout the pandemic.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move to adjourn the Region 9 Board of Education regular meeting (Lehberger, Pampel) Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 pm

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

Recorded by Kim Keil

Instrument# M2021000958
DATE FILED 12/31/2021 (Remote)
Christine Halloran
Town Clerk
Easton CT