

*Filed subject to approval*

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING  
Joel Barlow Middle School - Library Learning Commons  
On YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpOKinELAtzbYQcJ5NA3-hg>  
March 15, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.  
Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board members: D'Agostino, Johnston, O'Brien, Graziano, Denny, Lehberger, Pampel, Thompson  
Administration: McKinnon, Pierson Ugol, Almeida, Petruzzelli, Scrofani,  
Others: 8 members of the staff and public, the recording secretary and the videographer

CALL TO ORDER

M. D'Agostino called the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

STUDENT COMMENT

Joel Barlow High School Student Government Representative, Griffin Ellis, reported on recent accomplishments by saying: Graham Litz and Alexis Ogrinz are finalists in the 2022 Competition for National Merit Scholarships; the Debate team finished the regular season by placing in 10 consecutive events; the Girls' Basketball, Gymnastics and Boys Ice Hockey teams all received the SWC Sportsmanship Award for 2021-2022; Mariella Schweitzer and Emily Mulhern competed and did well in the New England Indoor Track & Field Championship; Scotty Romano, Stryder Hanson and Sophie Brault all competed in post-season wrestling competition; the JBWA Knights won the SWC/SCC championship; the Barlow/Bethel Boys Swim Team performed well at the SWC Championship meet; and the immersion-experience performance of "Macbeth" was very well attended.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alexis Bennett, Gallows Hill Road, Redding, congratulated the cast, crew and director Matt Farina for a wonderfully creative production and performance of "Macbeth." She said that the production had won several awards at the recent Connecticut Drama Association Festival.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

S. Lehberger said that with a bit of normalcy returning, people are experiencing the unraveling of emotions. She said that she urges students and parents to reach out to the school counselors.

C. Graziano said that she echoes what S. Lehberger just said, and congratulations to the team for the "Macbeth" show.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jason McKinnon, said that the only administrative report tonight would be the budget object summary and transfer reports, and that he would like Dr. Almeida to speak to the Barlow graduation date.

Joel Barlow High School Head of School, Dr. Mario Almeida, said that they have the date of Monday, June 20 on hold at the O'Neill Center at WestConn. Dr. Almeida explained that it's easier to hold graduation at the O'Neill Center as they take care of all logistics for the one price and there are no issues with inclement weather. He also said that the date of June 20 is one day before the last day of school, so they are trying to change the date with the O'Neill Center and/or work out something for the seniors. Board members commented on how wonderful it had been to have last year's graduation on-site at Barlow, but that they understood the logistical issues involved with it.

Dr. Almeida also said that Wednesday, March 23 will be the Connecticut SAT Day; with 9th graders taking the test with pencil and paper and the 11th graders taking the test on computers.

Director of Finance & Operations, Scott Petruzzelli, said that overall, the Budget Object Summary looks good and the District is in a good place. He said that: so far \$488,039 has been received in Special Education Excess Cost Reimbursement; also, that the money spent on the boiler issue will have to be absorbed this year; and that the District will recoup all the monies spent on the emergency water system remediation. S. Petruzzelli said that the health reserve remains very healthy at this point.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: ROBOTICS TEAM RECOGNITION

Three members of the JBHS Robotics Team, Tyler, Payton and Brian, spoke about the commitment of team members and advisors, the value of the team to JBHS, how the seasons are structured, logistics involved with the team's season, resources available to them and team fundraising efforts. The team showed a video showing them at work building a competition robot and then running the robot at a competition. Tyler explained the many aspects of STEM involved with the team and said that the team is currently limited by lack of facilities and the need to fundraise for equipment and travel costs. The team demonstrated their current robot, named "Tarzan," because it has the ability to climb up into a wooden structure which was also built by the team.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: 2022-2023 OPERATING BUDGET

Dr. McKinnon gave a recap of the budget process up to this point, with further information on discretionary vs. non-discretionary spending, bond inferential and SpEd outplacement. BOE members had questions about SpEd tuition, a large-print printer and maintenance costs, U-haul rental for Tri-District concert, ESY increase, NEASC conference costs and a hydraulic lift. An extended discussion took place on participation fees, how to treat clubs and activities equitably, the amount to put in the dues/fees budget line, and granting the administration the discretion to adjust or supplement funding for club/activities and stipends for club/activity advisors.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the proposed budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 of: \$24,755,519, which is an overall year-to-year increase of \$160,265, or .65%. Easton's share is: \$12,716,910 – an increase of \$795,590, or 6.67%; and Redding's share is: \$12,038,609 – a decrease of \$635,326, or 5.01%. The apportionment percentages for the two towns is as follows: Easton 51.37% – an increase of 2.9%; and Redding 48.63% – a decrease of 2.9%. (Graziano, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

M. D'Agostino said that the next steps would be the April 26 Regular meeting and then the May 2 Region 9 District Meeting, when they will move to send the proposed budget to a taxpayer vote on May 3. He thanked everyone for their hard work and said the proposed budget addresses student needs, provides for a direction for going forward and represents the values of the towns.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Food Services: K. O'Brien said that the committee will have a meeting on March 17. M. D'Agostino said that one lunch is still free for students; this program will end at the end of the school year and he does not know whether the federal government will extend the program moving forward.

Policy Committee: S. Lehberger said that the committee was reviewing Shipman & Goodwin policies to see where there are gaps in District policies and that they have a rubric for this work. Board members asked to see the rubric and questioned whether Policy Committee members were acting in accordance with the Motion passed at the previous Region 9 BOE meeting stating that Dr. McKinnon would be creating the rubric for policies. A lengthy discussion took place that touched on many points, including: possible lack of clarity in Motion regarding rubric; difference in the order of operations from the Policy Committee; integrity of Motion is not being followed; possibly changing/revising the Motion; with what models and rubric is the

Committee working; the charge of the Committee; the Superintendent to provide framework; full Board still needing to do homework about policies; Superintendent has the experience to do policy work quickly; rubric provides efficiency; drain on administrator time; the need for a Policy Committee; need for a mind shift to occur for the use of less policies; whether Redding and Easton school districts are in agreement; and need for alignment of policies between Easton, Redding and Region 9.

M. D'Agostino asked Dr. McKinnon about the timeline for having his rubric for the Shipman & Goodwin policies ready for the BOE. Dr. McKinnon replied that he would get back to M. D'Agostino in a few days about whether or not the policies would be ready to be moved to a 1st Reading on April 26.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting be adjourned. (Denny, Pampel). Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 p.m.

Submitted by Karen O'Brien

Secretary, Region 9 Board of Education

Recorded by  
Sarah Ota