

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION

April 26, 2016

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Region 9 Board of Education members: Coppinger, D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, Johnston, King, Lewis

Administration: McMorran, Sullivan, Pin, Pierson Ugol, Sheehy, Czudak, Desmarais and additional members of the leadership team

Others: eight members of the public and students, and the videographer

Mr. Hancock called the meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education to order at 7:36 pm in the Joel Barlow Media Center.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

The student representative, Sarah Jorgensen, was not present. Members of the HOSA Club (Health Occupation Students of America), explained that the purpose of their club is to provide an opportunity for students interested in the medical field to explore occupation options. Seven students attended the Connecticut Health Occupations of America Spring Leadership Competition Conference. Five of those attending were recognized for achievements in the competition that included a spelling bee, knowledge of medical terminology, medical photography and behavior health.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the March 15, 2016 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved 7-0-1. Mr. Johnston abstained.**

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the April 4, 2016 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved 5-0-3. Mrs. Gombos, Mr. Hancock and Mr. Coppinger abstained.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Yonkers, Redding: Dr. Yonkers, a member of the Redding Board of Finance, reported that the Board discussed the potential reduction of State revenue at their meeting on April 25, 2016. That Board has asked the Redding Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen to review their budgets in an effort to find greater efficiencies in operation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hocker asked what the impact would be for Region 9 if the proposed State reductions are realized. Mrs. Sullivan noted that Region 9 would not be impacted, that the revenue goes directly to the Towns of Redding and Easton, not the schools.

Mr. D'Agostino encouraged all taxpayers and parents to support the budget.

Mrs. Gombos noted that the potential ECS (Education Cost Sharing) reduction for Easton is about \$583,000.

Mr. Hancock also asked for support for the budget.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON 1:1 TECHNOLOGY – Student-owned, Student-leased. Chris Angell, Instructional Technology Coordinator, explained how important technology is as a tool in the classroom. The goal is to use technology to enhance the lessons being taught. He stressed the importance of students having technology devices with them for use in the classes, but that it is not mandatory. This initiative has a goal of having 1:1 student owned devices, currently only about 5-10% of the students bring their devices to school.

A Digital Technology Fair is planned that would provide students/families the opportunity to purchase devices from the vendors used by the school with the same educational discounts received by the school. This is planned to make the purchase of a computer easier. The offer would be available to students in grade 8 through graduating seniors. There is no cost or commission for the school, and the program is not mandatory.

Discussion followed. Mrs. Gombos felt that more review of the program and communications material with students/families would be needed. Dr. McMorran suggested a FAQ be prepared and Mr. Angell responded that the team is working on that.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize communication with parents as described and make a Digital Technology Fair available to students as described to move toward a 1:1 digital technology system at Joel Barlow high School. Hocker, Coppinger. Approved 7-1. Mrs. Gombos cast the dissenting vote.**

#### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF CLASSES OF 2007-2010 GRADUATION RATES AT 4 AND 6 YEARS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. Pin presented information from the National Clearing House comparing the Barlow graduating classes of 2007 & 2008 with the national data. Discussion followed. Mr. D'Agostino expressed concern over Mrs. Gombos felt that while the information was interesting, she was concerned about how it would be helpful and useful.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON TEACHER NON-RENEWALS

Dr. McMorran recommended the non-renewal of five teachers.

**Motion: move that the contract of employment for Deborah Bassino, Sarah Hart, Traci Healy, Carolyn Pollack, and Allison Taft not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015-2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action. Lewis, King. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON POLICY REVIEW

The following policies were presented for a first reading:

- Policy 5113(a): Students – Attendance and Excuses
- Policy 5113.2: Students - Truancy
- Policy 4115: Evaluation and Support Program
- Policy 4131(a): Personnel – Certified Professional Development

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept the following policies for a first reading:**

**Policy 5113(a): Students – Attendance and Excuses**

**Policy 5113.2: Students - Truancy**

**Policy 4115: Evaluation and Support Program**

**Policy 4131(a): Personnel – Certified Professional Development**

**Motion by Gombos, seconded by Johnston. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Assistant Superintendent and Head of School: Mrs. Pin announced that Assistant Principal MaryAnn Sheehy would retire at the end of the school year, and Julie McTague would take her place. Mrs. Pin reported the school participated in a lockdown practice on March 17. The drill exceeded the expectations of the Safety Committee with students remaining silent and off their cell phones for the duration of the drill. The date of graduation is June 9, with the last day of school on June 8. Mrs. Pin also announced that the Student Council and Class of 2018 was hosting a 5K Color Run on April 30 and the event will raise funds for student government and the Pilot House in Fairfield.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Pierson Ugol reported on the review and revision of the Science curriculum. The revision is necessary to meet the next generation of Science standards. The work on units of study for K-5 is near completion, but the curriculum for the middle school grades will require more work. She added that while the curriculum is being revised, there is work to be done by the teaching staff through professional development before the curriculum can be implemented in the classroom. Dr. Pierson Ugol also noted that Dr. Yeap Ban Har, the Singapore Math expert, will be in the Easton & Redding schools K-8 for two days in May. He will model lessons and meet with teachers to discuss his instructional approach.

Director of Finance: Mrs. Sullivan noted that health insurance claims for March were above the monthly budgeted amount, but the Reserve Fund balance is healthy. The Insurance Committee met and discussed many options regarding health insurance, including changing to a fully insured plan, raising the stop-loss limit, wellness plans, etc. A full report will be made at the Tri-board meeting in May. Mrs. Sullivan stated that the lighting replacement program has yields a savings of 83,000 kwh at the high school since it was done over the summer months. The loan for the work is being paid for by the monthly savings, it is a 4-year loan with a 0% interest rate. She added that there will be additional savings in manpower and equipment.

The Transportation Committee has recommended continuing with Dattco with a 3-year extension on the existing contract. The most current plan is to build a bus depot on the grounds of Veterans Park in Easton. There is sufficient land available to construct a 2-bay garage and office. There is plenty of parking available for the buses and for the driver's personal vehicles. Mrs. Sullivan consulted with Redding's First Selectman, Julia Pemberton, and there are no locations that would be suitable for the bus depot. Mrs. Sullivan stated that the goal would be to have the facility available for July 1, 2017. There will be additional discussion at the Tri-District meeting on May 17, 2016.

Mr. D'Agostino questioned some of the transfers on the Transfer Report. Mr. Czudak responded with explanations of the reasons for the transfers for work on the fields and grounds.

He noted that will the winter was mild, the fields saw more use and damage, and also allowed more maintenance to be one on the grounds.

Superintendent: Dr. McMorran commented that the proposed State revenue reduction is still a moving target, but may not be as severe as originally planned.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Financial Advisory Committee: Mr. Coppinger stated that a meeting was held prior to this meeting. The primary focus of the meeting was a discussion of the "charge" for the committee and the ever-changing role of the committee. The discussion will continue at their May meeting.

Audit Committee: Mr. King reported the committee met and reviewed the recommendations in the Audit Management Letter. Each recommendation was discussed and addressed with ways to improve the internal control system. The expense accounts and legal expenses were reviewed. The activity funds are in the process of being reviewed, and this is a work in process.

Pension Committee: Mr. King reported the committee met on April 25, 2016 with two actuaries represented and an investment advisor. The accounts/funds were reviewed and some changes were made to the investment portfolio.

Food Service Committee: Mr. Johnston reported the committee met, reviewed the responses to the RFP and invited two firms to make presentations on April 27, 2016, with samples of food.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

None

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Coppinger encouraged all to support the budget.

Mrs. Gombos requested an update on the State's review of the Building Project.

#### ADJOURNMENT

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

The meetings were adjourned at 9:56 pm.

Submitted by Catherine Gombos,  
Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday