

Region 9 Board of Education Meeting
February 28, 2017

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Board of Education Members: Coppinger, D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, King
Administration: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Pin, Lagas, Angell, Czudak, Desmarais, McTague,
Panos, Roszko, Santangeli, Schemm, Staron
Student Representative: Maha Ulhaq
Approximately 30 members of the public

Mr. Hancock called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

STUDENT COMMENT

Maha Ulhaq reported there are 4 competitions coming up including:

- Washington Annual Monument Conference on international affairs on Sunday March 5, 2017
- Robotics Competition in Waterbury on both March 4 and 5, 2017
- A conference on health related-subjects on March 22, 2017.
- The winter play Rashemon will be performing at the CDA Festival in Stamford on Friday, March 10, 2017.

Maha also reported on a student petition in relation to the budget.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: move that the Region 9 board of Education approve the Minutes of the January 26, 2017 Region 9 Board of Education Meeting. Gombos. Hocker. Approved. Unanimous

MOTION: move to approve the Minutes of the February 16, 2017 Easton, Redding & Region 9 Special Joint Meeting. Gombos. D'Agostino. 5-0-1 Approved. Mrs. Gombos abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kiko Teed, Rockhouse Road, Easton, spoke in support of the art program at JBHS and in support of art teacher Ms. Skalkos.

John Board, Umpawaug Road, Redding, spoke in support of art teacher Ms. Skalkos. He presented a letter with over 75 signatures from the class of 2015 in support of Ms. Skalkos.

Phyllis Rhodes, Gallows Hill Road, Redding, spoke in support of the school budget.

Linda Tranowski, Drummer Lane, Redding, spoke in support of the art program and art teacher Mrs. Skalkos.

Jane Skalkos Baldyga, Easton, spoke in support of art teacher Ms. Shalkos.

INSIR # M2017000154 RECD 03/07/2017 09:37:30 AM
CHRISTINE HALLOREN TOWN CLERK EASTON CT

Gretchen Holstein, Redding, spoke in support of the school budget.

Andrew Acosta, Redding, a former student, spoke in support of Ms. Skalkos.

BOARD COMMENT

Mr. D'Agostino would like to get advance notice on staff changes if possible.

Mr. King commented that that budget deliberations are typically difficult.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Dr. McMorran summarized the state's proposed budget cuts in three areas:

- Education Cost Sharing
- The Excess Cost Sharing for Special Education
- Pension Expense

Dr. McMorran urged people to exercise their civic rights and contact their representatives in Hartford.

Ms. Pin presented the staffing document to the board and answered board questions.

The Superintendent's Budget Proposal for 2017-2018.

Ms. Pin presented the budget. The current budget request is an increase of 2.33%.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Coppinger noted the enrollment is declining and that we have to make a cut to programming. We are eliminating a teacher as an individual.

Mr. Hocker asked to hear more about the debt service.

Mr. D'Agostino pointed out that some of the debt is for the field and many groups use it. He would like more information on what the school charges to other groups for using the turf. He noted that the decreasing enrollment will affect the optics of the budget. He is reluctant to pay for increases in other areas of the budget by draining the general education budget, cutting teachers and offerings for instance. He would like to take a closer look at special education.

Ms. Gombos would like more detail. She wants to be careful not to carve into the general education budget too much and wants to ensure that special education is funded appropriately. Mrs. Gombos requested the administration present budget recommendation in increments.

Mr. Hancock said he would also like to see more detail.

Mr. King said he sees this year as more challenging with the uncertainty in Hartford.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Head of School: Ms. Pin submitted the administrative report. More information will be provided at the next meeting regarding vendor-related contracts. Ms. Pin also said additional information is being gathered regarding surveillance cameras around the school.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Ms. Pierson Ugol said that new legislation requires schools to provide sexual assault/abuse awareness instruction. This will require some training for certified staff and paraprofessionals. Currently the school has an excellent working relationship with the Danbury Women's Center.

Director of Finance & Operations: Mr. Lagas reviewed the transfer report. There were two transfers of note in the grant area. One was a transfer from unused funds in pupil services to cover unexpected increases in student transportation. The second was a transfer of unused tutorial support funding to technology support, based on student need. These transfers are approved by the State. He reviewed the health insurance update. He also stated that state auditors have been in to review the Barlow building project and that he is waiting to receive their questions. He will get back to the board with information on supplemental certified staff costs, employee contribution to healthcare in the Central Office, electric bill expenses and more information regarding end of year expenditure numbers.

MOTION: Motion to approve the transfer in Grant Accounts of \$15,011 from Special Education Pupil Services to Special Education Student Transportation. D'Agostino. Hocker. Approved. Unanimous

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. King gave a report on Pension Committee.

Mr. D'Agostino distributed the approved Capital Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. D'Agostino would like to see reduction in increments down to zero, the Lewis Report and more information on special education numbers including percentages and costs.

Ms. Gombos also would like to see more detail on the budget in .2% or .5% increments going down.

Mr. King thanked the administration for the hard work they have done.

Mr. Coppinger said he would like to have some ideas about what the school's plan for cuts is for the following year as well.

MOTION: move to adjourn the meeting. Coppinger, King. Approved. Unanimous

Meeting Adjourned: 10:15 p.m.

Submitted by Catherine Gombos, Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Paula Darlington