

EASTON, REDDING, REGION 9 JOINT BOARDS OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING  
Joel Barlow High School – Library Learning Commons  
Tuesday, October 23, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.  
Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Region 9 Board of Education: D'Agostino, Coppinger, Hocker, Denny, Graziano, Hancock  
Redding Board of Education: Hoffman, Parkin, Pilato, Reilly, Whaley, Hoeing  
Easton Board of Education: Parker, Bindelglass, Hicks, Shortt  
Absent: Johnston (Region 9), Williams (Region 9), Irwin (R), Chieda (E), Reed (E)  
Administration: McMorran, Reiss  
Other: Rob Fitzpatrick, Insurance Consultant, Brown and Brown Insurance  
Members of the Public: 4 (approximately, including the videographer and representatives from First Student)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hoffman called the Easton, Redding, and Region 9 Joint Boards of Education Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. (the Meeting")

Easton Board of Education – Mr. Parker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Redding Board of Education – Mr. Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Region 9 Board of Education – Mr. D'Agostino called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.  
(each its respective "Board" and collectively, "the Boards")

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mrs. Pilato thanked the Region 9 Board for hosting the Meeting. She complimented the Boards for keeping the lines of communication open and commended Dr. McMorran for relaying information between the Boards. She welcomed feedback from the Region 9 Board.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE

Mr. Scott Reiss, Director of Finance & Operations, announced that Mr. Rob Fitzpatrick, insurance consultant from Brown and Brown was expected to join the Meeting. Mr. Reiss highlighted certain items on the Health Insurance handout distributed at the Meeting and noted that in the aggregate, the Boards' health insurance budget was in-line with expected costs, fees, and contributions.

Mr. Fitzpatrick joined the Meeting and began discussing changes to the health insurance plan since last year. He commented that it was too soon to make a determination on the plan's performance. He reported that the initial claims activity looked good and that he would update it monthly and provide it to the Board. He explained that claims activity was low during the months of July through September due to the plan deductible employees had to satisfy during these months.

He believed that employer funded contributions would decrease due in part to employees shifting their attitudes about the types of services they use and the introduction of Wellness Programs to incentivize an employee's use of programs which will enable them to take better care of themselves and their families. He noted that the state's health insurance plan also offered Wellness Programs. Mr. Fitzpatrick reviewed the Boards' annual combined costs and reiterated expected increases following the end of the deductible phase and out-of-pocket maximums. He compared the cost of the Boards' health insurance plan to the state's health insurance plan but was unable to compare plan performance due to the limited availability of public information. He advised that Brown and Brown submitted a FOIA request to the state and was optimistic that he would receive the unredacted information.

Mr. Fitzpatrick discussed adverse selection, the role of the Office of Public Management, the Boards' health insurance budget, and the viability of the state's health insurance plan. He described some of the challenges self-funded insurance plans encounter and cited the Town of Easton and four other boards represented by Brown and Brown as participants in the state's health insurance plan. He acknowledged the challenges boards face when considering these matters and advised that Brown and Brown would provide a more detailed and thorough report which would include an update on plan performance, claims activity and information on other insurance carriers in the state. He referred to the report and described incurred but not reported costs, plan design changes and mandatory contract language. Mr. Fitzpatrick advised that any state insurance carrier would be held to the standard of providing coverage which is equal to or better than what is required by the teachers' contract.

Mr. Fitzpatrick responded to questions from the Board which led to discussions on premiums, state increases, the future cost of the self-funded plan compared to the state's health insurance plan, Easton's transition from a fully-insured plan, stop loss risk tolerance, reopening contracts with the union and the customer experience during a transition. He also commented on the impact to Central Office and the amount of administrative hours it takes to manage a self-funded plan. Mr. Fitzpatrick discussed the viability of the state's health insurance plan if it lacked support from the next Governor. He noted that this assessment would be included in his detailed report in the near future.

The Board thanked Mr. Fitzpatrick as he exited the Meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NEW ED-099 AGREEMENT FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZED SIGNERS

Mr. Reiss referred to each Board's report on this topic and discussed revisions to the Agreement under the advisement of the USDA. The Agreement was revised to include all meal programs currently available at public schools. He explained that there were no substantial changes made to the Agreement but that the Board would be asked to approve the Agreement and designate Dr. McMorran and Mr. Reiss as the authorized signers. Mr. Reiss responded to questions from the Board and stated that the Joint Food Service Committee met to review changes to the Agreement.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education agrees to enter into a new ED-099 Agreement to participate in the Child Nutrition Program. Further, the Easton Board of Education designates Dr. Thomas McMorran, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Scott Reiss, Director of Finance & Operations, to be the authorized signers of the ED-099 Agreement and to certify claims for reimbursement for meals on behalf of the district (Hancock, Graziano). Approved (6-0).**

**Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education agrees to enter into a new ED-099 Agreement to participate in the Child Nutrition Program. Further, the Easton Board of Education designates Dr. Thomas McMorran, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Scott Reiss, Director of Finance & Operations, to be the authorized signers of the ED-099 Agreement and to certify claims for reimbursement for meals on behalf of the district (Parkin, Reilly). Approved. (6-0).**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education agrees to enter into a new ED-099 Agreement to participate in the Child Nutrition Program. Further, the Easton Board of Education designates Dr. Thomas McMorran, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Scott Reiss, Director of Finance & Operations, to be the authorized signers of the ED-099 Agreement and to certify claims for reimbursement for meals on behalf of the district (Shortt, Hicks). Approved (4-0).**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

None.

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### *Central Office Ad hoc Committee*

Mr. D'Agostino commented that the Committee is still at work would have an update on options for the Central Office in the relative near term at individual Board meetings or the January tri-board.

##### *Easton and Redding Policy Committees (meeting jointly)*

Mrs. Shortt reported that the Committee's work was moving along swiftly thanks to the effort put forth by the Boards.

##### *Joint Wellness Committee*

Mrs. Pilato expressed the Committee's passion for pursuing more healthy options which were coming to the school lunch program. She commented on the favorable performance of the Chartwells representative and solicited feedback from the Boards.

##### *Health Insurance Committee*

Mr. Reilly referred to the Health Insurance Update given earlier in the Meeting and stated that the Committee had met and reviewed the information prior to it being presented to the Boards at this Meeting.

##### *Easton and Redding Joint Curriculum Committee*

Mrs. Whaley reported that the Committee met but neither Board had a quorum at the start of the meeting to formally call the meetings into session. She stated that Dr. Pierson Ugol provided a handout regarding the Next Generation Science Standards and discussed two new curriculum legislative mandates. The Committee also discussed professional development and the challenges of collaboration across the districts.

#### RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS: RESPONSES TO THE TRANSPORTATION RFP

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education enter into Executive Session to discuss responses to the transportation RFP. Dr. McMorran and Mr. Reiss were invited to attend (Coppinger, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education enter into Executive Session to discuss responses to the transportation RFP. Dr. McMorran and Mr. Reiss were invited to attend (Parkin, Hoffman). Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education enter into Executive Session to discuss responses to the transportation RFP. Dr. McMorran and Mr. Reiss were invited to attend (Hicks, Bindelglass). Approved. Unanimous.**

The Boards entered executive session at 8:29 p.m.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION FOR POSSIBLE ACTION ON DISCUSSED ITEM IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Boards exited executive session at 8:50 p.m.

**Motion:** move that the Region 9 Board of Education award a contract for the transportation services outlined in the March 5, 2018 request for proposals to First Student, Inc. for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024 and authorize the Chair to sign a contract with First Student, Inc. for such services (Hocker, Williams). Approved (6-0).

**Motion:** move that the Redding Board of Education award a contract for the transportation services outlined in the March 5, 2018 request for proposals to First Student, Inc. for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024 and authorize the Chair to sign a contract with First Student, Inc. for such services (Pilato, Parkin). Approved (6-0).

**Motion:** move that the Easton Board of Education award a contract for the transportation services outlined in the March 5, 2018 request for proposals to First Student, Inc. for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024 and authorize the Chair to sign a contract with First Student, Inc. for such services (Parker, Bindelglass). Approved (4-0).

Mr. Reiss welcomed Mr. Vin Cappiello, Area General Manager and Ms. Elaine Reynolds, Location Manager, First Student. Mr. Cappiello expressed his gratitude to the Boards for its selection of First Student to provide the school's transportation needs. He announced that Ms. Reynolds had previous experience working in the ER9 district. Ms. Reynolds stated that she looked forward to returning to work with the schools and families in Easton and Redding.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeanne Wendschuh Redding, felt it was time to regionalize the Easton and Redding pre-k through 12 school districts rather than have three separate Boards. She relied on previous evaluations by an independent consultant's review of the tri-district structure and felt it would be good practice to follow their advice.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mrs. Denny thanked the members of the Transportation Committee for its work on the new agreement.

Mr. Bindelglass spoke on behalf of the Easton Board in follow-up to Mr. Fitzgerald's Health Insurance presentation. He explained that transitioning to the state's health insurance plan is a very complicated and detailed process that requires serious thought. He cautioned against making any knee jerk reactions.

Mrs. Graziano referred to the Public Comment made earlier and suggested the regionalization be strongly considered. Mr. D'Agostino expressed his concerns that previous efforts were resoundingly voted down. Mrs. Whaley added that the independent consultant's report from 2011 was previously available on the ER9 website. She explained that the study was commissioned by the [towns] and assessed the tri-district educational model. Mrs. Shortt opined that regionalization was worth looking into if the public was in favor of it.

Mr. D'Agostino inquired about the joint outsourcing committee discussed at the May tri-board meeting. Mr. Hoffman noted that it had not yet gotten off the ground. Mr. Reiss stated that he would schedule a meeting once the representatives were identified. Mrs. Graziano agreed to be a part of this effort.

ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education adjourn the meeting (Hancock, Hocker).  
Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education adjourn the meeting (Parkin, Reilly).  
Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education adjourn the meeting (Parkin, Bindelglass).  
Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Recorded by,  
Stephanie Benton

Submitted by,  
Christopher Parkin, Redding Board of Education Secretary