

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons

On YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpOKinELAtzbYQcJ5NA3-hg>

March 21, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board members: D'Agostino, Johnston, O'Brien, Graziano, Denny, Lehberger, Pampel, Thompson

Administration: Pierson Ugol, Almeida, Scrofani

Others: 3 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 7:05 p.m.

STUDENT COMMENT

Owen Fellows, Joel Barlow High School student government representative, read from a prepared report "Noteworthy News," that included: Wade Eubanks is a 2023 National Merit Scholarship finalist; Siddharth Gupta, Kai Smith, Jackson Mendes, Brookley Gil, and Mackenzie Sickinger all were recognized in the CT STEM Science Fair in February; several students attended the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium in March; 57 students were inducted into the World Language Honor Society in March; there will be a "Decade Dance" on March 31 for all 8th graders and JBHS 9th graders; the Math Team had a strong performance within the Fairfield County Mathematics League this season; Debate Team members Luis Diez, Griffin Speck, Catie Gutowski, Quinn Speck and Dylan Winegar all qualified for the State Final in late March; Catie Gutowski and Quinn Speck have qualified for the quarterfinals of the Virtual Supreme Court competition; Matthias Galban won the 1600m at the SWC Indoor Track & Field in February, with the Girls' 4x200 Relay Team finishing third and also a third place in pole vault; Scott Romero won the CIAC Class M Wrestling State Championship in February for a second consecutive year; Sophie Brault was the first JBHS student to compete in the CIAC Girls Wrestling State Championship; the Cheerleading Team won the New England Regional competition; the Girls' Basketball Team received the Harold Swaffield Sportsmanship Award for a second consecutive year; and, the Easton Public Library and the Mark Twain Library will be holding a library card drive at the school in April.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Seana Bedard, Winding Brook Road, Redding, read from a prepared statement which said, in sum: that she was speaking as a BCEP board member and that they recognize the original plan for the NEST has been scaled-down in the Region 9 proposal to now include what is truly needed at Barlow's stadium bathrooms, team rooms, a concession stand/ticket booth and an expanded parking area for the fields. She indicated that the BCEP Board is grateful for the commitment already shown by the Region 9 BOE; and, that the current goal of the BCEP is to support the Region 9 project, and help offset the cost of the NEST project with private fundraising and an ARPA grant.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

M. D'Agostino explained that Dr. McKinnon would not be at tonight's meeting as he was not feeling well.



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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Joel Barlow Head of School and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Mario Almeida, said that tomorrow would be the CT state-wide assessment day, with 11th graders and 9th graders taking assessment tests and with 10th and 12th graders having a four-hour and 15 minute delayed opening. He reported on two assemblies that had been held at Barlow a day earlier: Aaron Cooksey spoke about a personal tragedy concerning drinking & driving which was a required assembly for anyone attending prom; and, Scott Discoll spoke to students about internet safety.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Stephanie Pierson Ugol, said that she did not have a report, but since there is a Curriculum Committee meeting the next day she will have a report at next month's meeting.

Director of Finance, Operations & Technology, Sara Scrofani, reported that the District's budget website is updated and now on-line.

M. D'Agostino thanked the administration team and said that he has heard nothing but praise about the transparency of this year's budget process.

AGENDA CHANGE

**MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education add Agenda Item VI. A. Present the 2023-24 Proposed Operating Budget, and move down all other agenda items. (Pampel, Lehberger).
Approved. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED 2023-2024 OPERATING BUDGET

M. D'Agostino said that he did a brief presentation of the proposed Region 9 budget at the Redding board of Finance meeting previously, but that he felt that it's important for the public, who may be watching on Youtube, to present it again with a bit more detail. He showed a slide presentation on the proposed 2023-2024 operating budget that included the slides: Barlow's ranking (821st in the nation and 17th in the state); he reviewed the major budget drivers; the new Learning Center; proposed staffing changes; new A.P. course opportunities; SpEd outplacements; budget reduction in long term principal and interest payments; review of recently completed JBHS upper Gym HVAC & Safety Improvement Project; 2023-2024 apportionment; and, the overall 2023-2024 proposed operating budget.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NEST BUILDING AND FIELDS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

M. D'Agostino said that he is reshowing this presentation because it is important that residents see it and that he welcomes comments from the community. He said that the code compliant bathrooms are what is driving the design and footprint of the project, and that the proposed location for the NEST is where the current maintenance garage is located. The slide presentation included: statistics on Barlow student athletic participation; overview of current fields; increased field and parking capacity; enhancement of existing concession and ticket facilities; team rooms; showed new preliminary engineering plan slide; why now; Region 9 Capital request; operating budget debt service with new proposed cost; Redding/Easton Youth Sports; facilities enhancements from past, present and future; and, next steps to move forward. Board members asked for a general rendering of the new bathroom building and timeline for the project to be included in the presentation. M. D'Agostino replied that these could both be done, and that if

approved, work on the project would commence after graduation and the last day of school. The project will take three to four months to complete. K. O'Brien thanked Mr. D'Agostino for all his hard work in coordinating the project and putting together the presentations.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE PROGRESS PAYMENT INVOICE FOR ENGINEERING, DESIGN, AND PERMITTING RELATED TO THE FIELDS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

M. D'Agostino said that the invoice was discussed at the Facilities & Fields Committee meeting and approval was recommended to the full Board.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SET DATES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS - 1. 2023-2024 OPERATING BUDGET; 2. CAPITAL REQUEST AND BONDING AUTHORIZATION: NEST BUILDING AND FIELDS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

M. D'Agostino explained the need to reschedule to Public Hearings and said that there will also be a Special Meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education scheduled for Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 7:30pm.

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education schedule the Region 9 Public Hearing on the 2023-24 Operating Budget Proposal for Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 7:00pm. (Denny, Thompson). Approved. Unanimous.

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education schedule the Region 9 Public Hearing to adopt the Bond Resolution for Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 7:15pm. (Lehberger, O'Brien). Approved. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting be adjourned. (Graziano, Pampel).

Absent any objections, M. D'Agostino adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

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

Recorded by,
Sarah Ota