

Joint Meeting of
Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education
October 18, 2016
Minutes

Attendance:

Easton Board of Education – Bindelglass, Bobroske, Chieda, Hicks, Parker, Shortt
Redding Board of Education – Denny, Florkowski (7:45 pm), Gaspar (8:05 pm), Hoffman, Sobel.
Absent: Irwin, Miller.
Region 9 Board of Education – Coppinger, D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, Johnston, King, Lewis
Administration: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Sullivan, Pin
Others: Videographer and a reporter from *The Redding Pilot*

Mr. Parker, the Easton Board of Education chairman, chaired the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The Easton Board of Education Chair, Jeffrey Parker, called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.
The Region 9 Board of Education Chair, Vance Hancock, called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.
The Redding Board of Education did not have a quorum at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Parker introduced the new member of the Easton Board of Education, Cindy Shortt.

The Redding Board of Education Chair, Sara Sobel, called the meeting to order at 7:47 pm.

DISCUSSION: CENTRAL OFFICE 2017-18 BUDGET POSSIBILITIES INCLUDING ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEADERSHIP SALARIES

Dr. McMorran provided the three Boards of Education with data pertaining to Central Office staffing in preparation for the 2017-2018 budgets, including a proposal for an additional position, Director of Digital Learning. Dr. McMorran spoke of numerous new state mandates that have increased the workload of Central Office staff. He also suggested that each Board appoint one member to negotiate individually the contracts of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and the Director of Finance & Operations. Their contracts expire at the end of the current school year. He suggested that the Boards consider a 2.3% increase for these administrators or something in the range of 1.6% (the average of the general wage increase for each of the teacher associations) and 3.04% (the average of the total wage increase of each of the teacher associations).

Mrs. Gombos suggested a non-meeting of the three Boards of Education to discuss negotiation strategies and that each Board should appoint a representative to negotiate on its behalf.

Dr. McMorran shared a chart of comparable administrative/leadership positions in other school districts and their 2015-2016 salaries. He indicated CES would be providing more recent salary data shortly.

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Dr. McMorran explained the need for a Director of Digital Learning (Director of Technology) position. He indicated there is a similar stipended position at Joel Barlow High School. The teacher filling this role also teaches three sections of English. He expressed his concern about redundancy in work being done across the three districts and felt that it would be more cost effective to have this individual fill the role tri-district wide with Easton and Redding each paying a stipend of approximately \$7,000 each. The combined salary would be consistent with that of an assistant principal's salary.

Mr. D'Agostino commented that he felt this was really a Central Office position. Dr. McMorran said that he does not want to take the individual out of the JBEA whereby he would lose his seniority in a time of reduction in enrollment. Mr. Coppinger said he also sees this as a Central Office position, a shared resource with its own job description. Mrs. Florkowski voiced her concern that the taxpayers want to see a decreased Central Office staff. She supports the position being based out of Joel Barlow. Mrs. Gombos asked for clarification on the contracted salary being shared by the three districts. She felt the position may reduce the work of individuals in the K-8 districts and that communication with the public is key to understanding the need for the role. She felt the position should be posted. Several other Board members agreed that it should be a Central Office position, separate from the teaching position at Joel Barlow High School.

Dr. McMorran displayed a chart comparing Human Resources Departments in area school districts, comparing staffing, salaries and basic responsibilities. Dr. McMorran pointed out that none of those positions other than the ER9 Human Resources Manager has the responsibility of payroll. He stated that from his direct observation the ER9 Human Resources Manager is an administrative position; it is one of four key positions at Central Offices. He proposed an increase in salary of \$10,000 over each of the next five years to bringing this position's salary in line with salaries of assistant principals.

Mrs. Gombos said that if a Director of Human Resources position were created, it should be posted with a clear job description so that a search could be performed for someone with appropriate credentials.

There was discussion about the number of hours being worked to get the workload done. The individual holding this position also receives stipends for other work, mail run and Webmaster. There was discussion about state legislation adding to the responsibilities of the HR Department. Several Board members suggested a two-week time study. Mrs. Bobroske said she felt a job assessment should be done and wondered if too much was being asked of one person. Mr. Coppinger suggested that the Boards take a look at Central Office and how the workload is being done overall. Dr. Bindelglass suggested the position is distorted; if the person currently filling it were to leave would it be easy to find a replacement. Mrs. Florkowski commented that declining enrollment does not lessen the work of Central Office staff in responding to constantly changing federal and state mandates.

The discussion then moved to Central Office support staff compensation. Dr. McMorran recommends a 2.75% increase in line with that which will be received by the non-certified staff in 2017-2018. Several Board members asked for a comparison of hourly pay rates and insurance premium cost shares.

Dr. McMorran thanked everyone for their feedback and stated that the conversation on these topics would continue over the next several months.

DISCUSSION: UPDATE ON LOCATION OF THE BUS DEPOT

Mrs. Sullivan reported there were two identified locations in Easton for the bus depot, with Morehouse Road next to Samuel Staples Elementary School being the preferred location of the two. The other location was at Veterans Park but there are concerns about the traffic level. The location would house a parking area and a small office but no maintenance garage. DATTCO is looking at two of their current locations in Bridgeport and New Britain to see if the maintenance work could be done there and what the additional operating costs would be. DATTCO is also exploring other locations not in Easton or Redding to house everything. The Redding First Selectwoman is also looking into possible Redding locations. The contract at the current location in Bethel expires in July of 2018.

DISCUSSION: LONG-RANGE PLANNING IN EASTON, REDDING & REGION 9

Dr. McMorran gave a presentation on Coherence Planning for Long-Range Strategies. The presentation will be posted on the Website.

DISCUSSION: STATUS OF HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS

Dr. Bindelglass reported that four bids were received in response to a Request for Proposals from insurance consultants, three of whom have been invited to be interviewed at a meeting on Thursday of the joint Easton, Redding and Region 9 Health Insurance Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Hoffman stated he appreciated the superintendent's early presentation on the Central Office budget and his creative approach. He also commented on the long list of mandates from Hartford.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Hoffman, Florkowski. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Lewis, Johnston. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Bindelglass, Chieda. Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by Regina Bobroske, Easton Board of Education

Recorded by Vicki Cram