

**REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION
November 15, 2016
MEETING MINUTES**

Attendance:

Region 9 Board of Education Members: D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, King, Lewis
Administration and Staff: McMorran, Pierson Ugol, Sullivan, Pin, Desmarais, McTague, Panos, Roszko
Student Representative: Ella Gaspar and Meghan Bourgeault
Others: 2 members of the public, representative of *The Redding Pilot* and *Easton Courier*, and the videographer.

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

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: move to add an agenda item – Gift Recognition and Acceptance as item I under Discussion and Possible Action. Gombos, D'Agostino. Approved. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the October 25, 2016, regular meeting and the October 18, 2016, joint meeting of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education as corrected. D'Agostino, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous. The correction was to the October 25, 2016 meeting minutes: Bottom of page 3, Mr. Hocker stated the word should be "suggested" rather than "decided" on the sentence to add an agenda item for the December Board meeting following receipt of the state audit report on the building project.

STUDENT COMMENT

Ella Gaspar reported on the continued success of the Debate Team; there are two All-State athletic teams – Cross Country and Field Hockey. The fall play, *Into the Woods*, starts next week along with Powder Puff Games.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Ella Gaspar and Meghan Bourgeault spoke about a new Student Steering Committee which amplifies student voices. The committee meets once a month with representatives from each grade level. The current focus is on stress and the topic is homework and test scheduling. The committee currently has seven members. Mrs. Pin stated there is a criteria for student membership and the meeting is held during student activity. Several Board members expressed their hope that the meetings could be held during X period and be open to more students.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Hocker commented that he appreciates the Student Recognition section of the Board meetings.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

- A. Review of 6/30/16 Draft Financial Statements: Mrs. Sullivan introduced Jennifer Mazzuocollo, auditor for RSM, who reviewed the draft financial statement and gave a clean, unqualified opinion and stated there were no material weaknesses. Two recommendations were made: 1) Establish a general ledger trial balance for the internal service fund and 2) concern that the Board of Education accountant is able to enter payroll transactions and review payroll activity. Mrs. Gombos asked if there had been an exploration of using an external payroll company. Mrs. Sullivan indicated this had been done in the past year and she would report on the proposals received. Mrs. Sullivan mentioned that the Board should formally accept the draft financial statement either at tonight's meeting or at the December meeting. Mr. Hancock asked that it be added to the December agenda.
- B. 2017 Board of Education Meeting Schedule: Board members will review the draft meeting schedule. It should be included on the December meeting agenda for approval.

- C. Student Performance Data Presentation – Part 2: Mrs. Pin gave a presentation on Advanced Placement courses, College Placement, and GPA. The presentation will be posted on the Board's Website.
- D. School District Cost Comparisons: Mr. King reported on the work of several people over the past few months to compare Region 9's costs to similar school costs. Mrs. Sullivan stated that data looked at was from Weston, Wilton, Ridgefield, Newtown, the two Fairfield high schools, and Region 15 (Middlebury and Southbury). The aggregate spending reports of those school districts were reviewed. The report will be posted on the Board's Website. Mr. King noted that this report is a starting point. Mr. D'Agostino asked if more data would be given on Special Education cost comparisons.
- E. Budget Presentation, Format and Sequence: Dr. McMorran stated that he wanted to divide the budget in manageable chunks organized around district objectives so that the Board has a clear understanding of what administration is asking for and what the desired outcomes are. Preliminary budget information will be given over the next several months, including new program concepts and anticipated special education costs.
- F. Disbanding and/or Changing the Charge of the Financial Advisory Committee: Mr. Hancock suggested tabling this item until the December Board meeting since Mr. Coppinger was not in attendance.
- G. Disbanding and/or Changing the Charge of the Communications Committee:
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education disband the Communications Committee. Lewis, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous. Mr. Hocker gave the background on the committee which had been restarted by previous Board member, Leon Karvelis. When Mr. Karvelis left the Board, no one came forward to head the committee. The hard work of Mr. Karvelis was acknowledged, including one of his initiatives – having the Board meetings videotaped and posted on the Website.
- H. Policies for Review – Second Reading:
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy #6153.1, Instructional – Education Tours for second reading with two changes noted by Mr. Hocker. Hocker, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.
 Mr. Hocker noted that sentence at the end of the third paragraph reappears at the end of the fourth paragraph in error. He also noted on page 3 under .4 - non-school sponsored tours there is a designation in parentheses called "alternate" which may have been left in by mistake.
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy #5141.7 Students – Student Sports and Concussions for second reading. D'Agostino, Lewis. Approved. Unanimous. Mr. Hocker noted that everything following page 3 is a recommended regulation as opposed to a policy and should be removed since the Board approves policies not regulations.
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy #3152, Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Spending Public Funds for Advocacy for second reading with removal of references to "print" or "printing". D'Agostino, Lewis, Approved. Unanimous.
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy #3520.11, Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Electronic Information Security for second reading with one correction – changing "Region 9 Public Schools" to "Region 9 School District". D'Agostino, Lewis. Approved. Unanimous.
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept policy #3520.12, Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Data-Based Information Management Systems for second reading. D'Agostino, Lewis. Approved. Unanimous.
- I. Gift Recognition and Acceptance:
Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept with gratitude a gift of \$5,000 from United Technologies to the school's Robotics Team. Gombos, King. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept with gratitude donations from the Weller Foundation for - \$500 for the purchase of educational books, \$500 to support the performing arts program, \$500 to support the industrial arts program, \$500 to support the Robotics Team, and \$1,000 to support the math department program. Hocker, King. Approved. Unanimous. Dr. McMorran stated that it is the district's responsibility to report back to the Weller Foundation how the funds are used.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Head of School: Mrs. Pin reported that school representatives visited the Easton/Redding middle schools to meet with 8th graders to report on what Joel Barlow offers. Magnet and agricultural schools do similar presentations. The Special Education report shows that 19 seniors will be leaving the program at the end of the school year, and it is anticipated 24 students will be entering the program in 2017-2018 from the middle schools. Six of those students are in the BASES programs at the middle schools. They have significant levels of services.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Pierson Ugol reported on the work of the K-12 counseling team with a focus on strengthening transition.

Director of Finance & Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported that the October health insurance claims were at \$122,000. She reported on apportionment totals - including 21 outplaced students (11 Redding, 10 Easton) made the ratio 53.48% to 46.52% - rounded to a tenth of a percent means the apportionment is the same as reported in October. Mrs. Sullivan reported six bids were received for Bond Counsel. Mr. Hocker and Mr. Johnston had volunteered to review the bids. There was discussion of determining the statutory formula in determining apportionment. There was a transfer of approximately \$11.00 for the purchase of a standing desk. Discussion followed about piloting standing desks and presenting it to the Boards as a new initiative before such purchases are made.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Pension Committee: Mr. King reported the fund of \$5.5 million; transactions into the fund were \$375,000. \$66,000 were paid out in benefits. Investment gains were \$172,000. Rate of return for the past one, three and five years were 9%, 4% and 8%.

Audit Committee: The Audit Committee reviewed professional fees (legal and accounting) and travel expenses, and the committee was satisfied that everything was fine.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dana Grey, Lamppost Drive, Redding: Commended Gina Pin on her data report.

Jeanne Wendschuh, Deer Spring Road, Redding: Asked if the Board has any control over the percentage that the state teachers' pension uses for assumptions listed on footnote of report.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Hocker acknowledged the passing of Jordan Wright, a Barlow graduate and coach.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: move to adjourn the meeting. Lewis, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 10:17 pm.

Submitted by Catherine Gombos, Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Vicki Cram