

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 24, 2016
MEETING
Minutes

Attendance: Region 9 Board of Education members: Coppinger, D'Agostino, Gombos, Hancock, Hocker, Johnston, King, Lewis
Administration: Sullivan, Pin, Pierson Ugol, Sheehy, Geraghty, and additional members of the leadership team
Student Representative: Sarah Jorgensen
Others: eight members of the public, a representative of the Redding Pilot/Easton Courier and the videographer

Mr. Hancock called the meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education to order at 7:32 pm in the Joel Barlow Media Center.

STUDENT REPORT

Student Representative, Sarah Jorgensen, reported on student activities and events, student recognitions and upcoming events, including the winter play "The Devil and Daniel Webster". She introduced student Emma Boland and the Art teacher Lee Skalkos. Ms. Boland was awarded First Place National for her jewelry piece at the national High School Metals Competition. Only 35 works were accepted in the competition this year, Ms. Boland had two pieces accepted and Olivia Cochrane had one metals piece selected.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 26, 2016 meeting as corrected. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved. 5-0-3. Mrs. Gombos, Mr. Johnston and Mr. King abstained.

Corrections: page 2, motion on acceptance of gifts, correct company name is United Technologies Co., page 2, under discussion of retirement incentive, change Retirement Health fund to Health Retirement account; page 3, under Finance Director's report, the Easton Board of Education received approval for \$1,200,000 appropriation.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 joint boards meeting as submitted. Gombos, Johnston. Approved. 7-0-1. Mr. King abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. King reported on the Pension Committee meeting. The committee reviewed investments and made some changes to the portfolio.

Mr. D'Agostino asked for a follow-up to his question last month on why the publication of the Honor Roll took so long. Mrs. Pin responded that the list is not finalized until all the incomplete grades have been recorded. The Leadership Team is meeting to resolve the issues and get the list published in a more timely manner.

DISCUSSION PF 2016-17 OPERATING BUDGET

Mrs. Pin presented information on the proposed operating budget for 2016-17. The presentation included achievements of the students, history of approved budgets, enrollment trends, proposed reductions,

increases in Special Services enrollment and associated costs, State and Federal mandates, proposed and approved budget increases from other area towns. The proposed budget increase is 2.39% or \$23,696,549.

It was requested that all salary numbers be updated so that all salary numbers are fully-loaded numbers.

There was also a request for a comparison of what out-of-district services would cost as compared to the additional costs being proposed in the budget.

Board members asked questions during the presentations. Further discussion of the proposed budget is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2016. Board members were asked to submit questions and requests for further information to the Finance Director prior to the budget workshop meeting.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON ACCEPTANCE OF ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Finance Director Sullivan requested the board approved the Roof Replacement Project as complete so that paperwork can be submitted to the State for audit and reimbursement. The warranty for the roof has been received and all work is complete.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept the Roof Replacement Project as complete. Coppinger, D'Agostino. Approved. Unanimous.

Mrs. Gombos asked about the status of the Building Project from 2000. Mrs. Sullivan reported the final EDO form as been accepted by the state, and is in line for the audit process.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Principal's Report: Mrs. Pin reported the Paris Exchange Student Trip was very successful, and the students improved their French conversational skills. She encouraged all to attend the upcoming Winter Show.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Dr. Pierson Ugol reported the K-12 Technology Committee is reviewing the implementation of the Google platform, use of Gmail and the Google calendar. Short and long term plans are being developed for the use of the Google platform. An early dismissal day in May is planned for professional development activities on the use of Google. The K-12 Science Committee is working on professional development activities. She will be creating more leadership positions to allow attendance at workshops and conferences, and then bring the information back to the district.

Financials and Operation: Mrs. Sullivan reported on the following items:

- Health Insurance: the claims for January were less than the budget. The Easton schools continue to have high claims.
- Health Insurance renewal: Mrs. Sullivan has asked the consultant to look at other options/alternatives. A committee is needed to review the information and make recommendations. Mrs. Gombos will represent Region 9 on the joint committee.
- Auditor Management Letter: Mrs. Sullivan circulated copies of the Management Letter with the auditor's observations and recommendations, and the responses to those recommendations.
- Transfer Report: the report was reviewed.

Superintendent: Dr. McMorran provided his observations on the budget process, especially the proposed reduction in staffing. He noted that there are two kinds of reductions, those that reduce costs, economies based on enrollment decrease, and those that result from a change in program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Food Service Committee: Mr. Johnston reported the committee reviewed the RFP (Request for Proposal), and that has been sent out to vendors. The committee will reconvene when the proposals are received.

Facilities & Fields Committee: Mr. D'Agostino reported the committee met prior to the meeting to review additions to the Capital Plan. The additions are being vetted and will be presented to the full board when the estimated costs are determined. There was also a discussion of adding solar panels to the roof of the school. The committee decided that a thorough discussion of adding solar panels should be held by the entire board following the budget season.

Head of School Search Committee: Mrs. Gombos reported that interviews for the position of Head of School are moving forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Bloom, Redding: Mr. Bloom, an accountant, noted that budget numbers down to the dollar are usually not accurate and suggested rounding off the numbers. He suggested the board look for ways to increase the revenue for educational expenses through endowments or grants, and to look for opportunities for online study or collaboration with WestConn. He expressed concern about the elimination of business courses and asked if experienced business experts could be brought in as adjunct teachers.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Coppinger asked that the website listing for committee assignments be updated.

Mr. D'Agostino asked that the website be corrected for the time of the Board's meetings.

Mr. Lewis commented that he feels the 2+% increase is too high. He asked that the administration look at ways to reduce the budget and suggested that an executive session may be needed to review the specific needs of students requiring special services.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move that the meeting be adjourned. D'Agostino, Coppinger. Approved. Unanimous.

The meetings were adjourned at 9:35 pm

Submitted by Catherine Gombos, Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday