



REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SPECIAL MEETING

Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons

January 2, 2020 – 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Board members: D’Agostino, Johnston, Denny, Graziano, Williams, Pampel, O’Brien, Berry

Administration: McMorrان, Pierson Ugol

Staff: Pin, McTague, Desmarais

Student Representative: Monson

Others: Eight members of the public, recording secretary and the videographer.

Mr. D’Agostino called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. D’Agostino stated that technically, at the present time, there were not any officers for the Region 9 Board of Education and that standard practice is for Dr. McMorrان to be appointed pro temp Chairperson for the purpose of election of officers.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education appoint Dr. McMorrان pro temp Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education for the purpose of election of officers (Graziano, Berry). Approved. Unanimous.

Dr. McMorrان thanked Mr. D’Agostino for his two years of leadership as Chairperson of the Region 9 Board of Education. He said the Chairpersonship now needs to turn to a board member from Easton.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education nominate Mr. Johnston as Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (Graziano, Williams). Approved. Unanimous.

Mr. D’Agostino said that even though Mr. Johnston was unopposed, the vote still needed to be written down. The board all wrote down their votes on a piece of paper to be filed in Central Office files.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education nominate Ms. Graziano as Vice-Chairperson of Region 9 Board of Education (D’Agostino, Williams). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education nominate Mr. D’Agostino as Treasurer of Region 9 Board of Education (Graziano, O’Brien). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education nominate Ms. Berry as Secretary of Region 9 Board of Education (Pampel, O’Brien). Approved. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Johnston pointed out that Mr. D'Agostino's name was misspelled on page 2 of the minutes of November 19, 2019.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of November 19, 2019, Regular Meeting with one correction. (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of December 2019 Special Meeting as submitted (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved. 6-0-2. Two abstentions (Johnston, Williams).

STUDENT COMMENT

Student representative, Max Monson said that: the National Honor Society induction ceremony was held, with 41 students being inducted this year; the girls volleyball team were the SWC champions; final exams had been moved to January 21-24 because of inclement weather in December; and, plans are being made for a Spirit Week in May.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Fligelman, Pocahontas Road, Redding, advocated for the continuation of courses in Latin at JBHS. He said that students should be allowed to finish their sequential program of studies in Latin at JBHS.

Jeff Fligelman, Pocahontas Road, Redding, said that if the Latin program is now discontinued at JBHS, then it will make it harder for these students to apply to college since colleges want 2-3 years of a continuous study of a world language. He also said that if the BOE wants to make a cut, then they should plan for it, that we must honor our commitment to the Latin students to finish their program.

Carol-Ann Galban, Redding Road, Redding, stated that Latin benefits students going into the careers of medicine, law and engineering. She also urged the BOE to continue the Latin program at JBHS until the current students are done at JBHS.

Carol Murray, Sport Hill Road, Redding, said that the quality of the Latin program needs to be addressed. She said the school should help those students who want a challenging curriculum and that these students deserve the opportunity to be challenged.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Ms. Williams welcomed the new board members to the Region 9 Board of Education. Mr. Johnston welcomed the new board members and thanked board members for having the confidence in him to serve as the new Chairperson. Mr. D'Agostino said he has all the confidence in Mr. Johnston to be a great Chairperson. He recapped highlights of the work of the Region 9 Board of Education during his Chairpersonship and thanked Ms. Desmarais and Ms. McTague for their leadership during the absence of Dr. Pin. Ms. Graziano thanked Mr. D'Agostino for his two years of service as Chairperson and thanked Mr. Johnston for stepping up to be the new Chairperson. She welcomed the new board members. Ms. Graziano also said that the Curriculum Committee did have input in proposed changes to the program of studies. Ms. Berry said thank you for the welcome. Ms. O'Brien said that she is looking forward to the new year. Ms. Pampel said thank you for the welcome and thank you to the members of the public for speaking.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF 2020 PROPOSED BOARD MEETING AND COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES

Mr. D'Agostino explained that the board meeting schedule for 2020 needs to be approved by January 31, per a State of Connecticut mandate. Ms. Graziano suggested tabling the committee meeting schedule since the composition of the committees has not yet been formed.

Mr. Johnston said he would send out an email about the committees and board members could then email him back with their preferences.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept the 2020 schedule of Regular and Special board meetings, but not individual committee meetings (Williams, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: ALIGNING STATE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS WITH COURSE OFFERINGS BY DEPARTMENT

Dr. Pin said that the Curriculum Committee had recently met to discuss and plan for the State of Connecticut's new high school graduation requirements, which now include 50 academic credits for high school students. Dr. Pin said that the administration is confident that JBHS students will meet the 50-credit requirement and that JBHS is keeping the U.S. history requirement even though the State of Connecticut has done away with it. Ms. Graziano said that there is really no net change to requirements, but more of how courses are labeled and allocated. Ms. Williams said that the Committee concluded that the Wellness program is important to the emotional well-being of JBHS students. Mr. D'Agostino asked what other DRG A schools were doing about U.S. history and the mastery-based credits of new requirements. Dr. Pin replied that DRG A schools are also keeping U.S. history as a requirement and that the mastery credits are for individual districts to define for themselves.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the Program of Studies as defined on report with world language and mastery-based credits (O'Brien, Williams). Approved. 7-1.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: STRATEGY FOR CLASSES WITH LOW PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS

A discussion took place about possible strategies for classes with low enrollment, with a chart of JBHS courses that have an enrollment of 15 or less students as a reference point. Mr. D'Agostino said that it's difficult to compare guitar class to an AP class because they are two very different things. Dr. McMorran said that the implication is how broadly do we embrace the electives and academic course offerings; that it's a balancing act. Dr. Pin said that decisions will be based on what is best for the students. Mr. D'Agostino said that the best educational plan needs to be made for our students, instead of comparing ourselves to other districts and schools in the DRG, and then we can decide what we can afford. Ms. McTague said they need to see how many of the JRMS students pick Latin for their World Language, which will be soon.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: PRELIMINARY BUDGET DISCUSSION

Ms. Williams said she thinks they will be making hard choices. Ms. Graziano said she supports a variety of suggestions, including larger class size, if that means course offerings can be saved. Mr. D'Agostino said that we should be mindful that we (all three BOEs) are all connected.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: JBHS: METRICS WE WANT TO BE MEASURED BY

Dr. Pin introduced a video about JBHS that was made by Mr. Paola and Mr. Giordano. The video was part of a challenge from Dr. McMorran to the JBHS administrators of "How Do We Want to Be Measured?" Dr. Pin thanked Dr. McMorran for the challenge, saying it was a great exercise.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: POLICY - 2nd READING (EASTON and REDDING VERSION) 6142.101 STUDENT NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY)

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept Policy 6142.101 Student Nutrition and

Physical Activity (School Wellness Policy). (Williams, Denny). Approved. Unanimous.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Dr. Pierson Ugol reported on the professional learning sessions called "A Gateway to Connecticut's Success: Leading Schools into the Future," which a tri-district team participated in this past fall. The sessions challenged the tri-district team to consider current practice, the changes associated with a future-focused education and the needs of today's students for the purpose of drafting a framework to guide future-focused teaching and learning. Dr. Pierson Ugol said it is this framework that will be the portraits of a graduate that will give life to ER9's vision, mission and student learning goals.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Williams said that the Policy Committee will be meeting on Friday, January 3, with members from all three BOEs. She said that their goal is to take aspirational language out of policies and focus on what the policy is really about.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Murray, Sport Hill Road, Redding, said that she wanted to reiterate her thoughts from earlier in the evening. She also said that maybe the scheduling of AP courses could be re-thought -- for instance, AP math courses should not be at the same time as AP science courses -- so that students could take more AP courses.

BOARD COMMENT

Ms. O'Brien said that she feels creative solutions can be found. She also said that students should be able to stretch themselves and would like to revisit the possibility of students taking APs during 10th grade. Ms. Berry said that her son took AP courses as a 10th grader and that he was fine. Ms. Gaziano said that she was open to revisiting 10th graders taking AP courses for select students. Mr. Johnston said that committee sheets will be emailed. Ms. Denny said that she appreciated the viewpoints on APs. Ms. Williams said that she wanted to clarify about AP courses being eliminated; the Curriculum Committee will be looking at drivers. She also said that certain students may be ready for AP courses in 10th grade and was open to a petition process for opening the availability.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education meeting be adjourned (D'Agostino, Graziano). Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Submitted by,
Juliette Berry, Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by,
Sarah Ota