

REDDING BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 23, 2010

Present: Barickman, Gaspar, Goldberg, Joyce-Kirk, Miller
Administration: Cicchetti, Sullivan, Mas, Pierson Ugol, Martin, Wallin, Farrell, Freeston
Others: nine members of the staff & community and a representative of the Redding Pilot

Dr. Gaspar called the March 23, 2010 meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. in the Community Room of the John Read Middle School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2010 meeting as submitted. Miller, Goldberg. Approved. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Todd Trimble, Iris Lane: expressed concern about the staff reductions made to reduce the budget increase; suggested these reductions be revisited and the proposed budget be increased.

BOARD MEMBER APPRECIATION MONTH

In honor of March being board member appreciation month, Dr. Cicchetti presented each board member with a chocolate bar to thank them for their service. The principals, Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Pierson Ugol, read letters from students to board members thanking them for their dedication and service to the students of Redding.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Barickman thanked the administrative team, especially Mrs. Sullivan, for their work on the budget. Mr. Gaspar thanked the PTA for their support throughout the budget process and asked for support for the upcoming referendum on the budget. Mrs. Joyce-Kirk added thanks to the parent volunteers on the Capital Plan Subcommittee for the many hours they spent in preparation of the report.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS CONCERNING THE INSTITUTION OF TEACHER NONRENEWALS

Motion: Move that, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151, the Redding Board of Education nonrenews the teacher contracts of Teresa Valvo, Cindy Gacetta, Diane Mitchell, Allison Marsh and Kristin Coughlin at the end of the 2009-2010 school year as recommended by the Superintendent.

I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing to Teresa Valvo, Cindy Gacetta, Diane Mitchell, Allison Marsh and Kristin Coughlin that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any requests for a hearing, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statutes § 10-151; and that the Superintendent be directed that any response to a request for a hearing, if a hearing is required by law, indicate that such hearing is to be before the Board of Education. Gaspar, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE OPERATING BUDGET

The operating budget for 2010-2011 was reviewed by the Board of Finance at their meeting on March 22, 2010 and no changes were made to the school budget.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE CAPITAL BUDGET

The Capital Budget was presented at the March 22, 2010 Board of Finance meeting and will be discussed further at a special meeting on April 7, 2010. The issue of project oversight for the various projects on the list will be discussed further at that time.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

RES: Mrs. Pierson Ugol provided a written report. She thanked the PTA for their assistance with fundraising efforts to Haiti. The annual ArtFest was a huge success. The Reflections Award Ceremony recognized Luci Gorman, Max Monson, Charlie Prather and Ava MacNeal. Mrs. Pierson Ugol reported the "Tech Thursdays" are back on the schedule, providing staff members with additional training on the SMARTboards, electronic portfolio and NWEA program.

JRMS: Mrs. Martin submitted a written report. She recognized award winners in the Reflections competition, Sam Gaspar, Gloria Davey, Black Pritchard and Samantha Calzone. She reported that students in grades 5, 6 and 7 will participate in the school climate survey of the Surviving Bullying Charity. A descriptive letter was sent to all parents regarding the survey and opportunity for parents to have their child opt out. She added that only a few students opted out. Mrs. Wallin reported on the change in schedule as a result of the ½ time reduction of the Woodshop course. Overall, students will have the opportunity to participate in the Woodshop course two of their four years at JRMS. The other FPA classes will be larger in size as a result of the change.

Special Education: Mr. Farrell reported the Pre-school Program for next year has only two open slots. The tuition for the program will increase by the same percentage as the operating budget, 3.5%. Mr. Farrell is in discussion with St. Joseph College in Hartford for an intern program for the Autism program. Mr. Goldberg suggested that he get information from the area pre-schools regarding tuition costs to determine if Redding's program is competitive.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Mrs. Mas reported that members of the ER9 World Language Curriculum Committee will meet to discuss textbook review for a possible pilot, and for the discussion of adoption of the new Spanish and French textbooks. A consortium of DRG A school district representatives have met to plan professional development for the new CSDE Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (Team), replacing the BEST program. The district's TEAM Coordinator Committee (TCC) for Barlow is Gina Pin. The ER9 Wellness Advisory Committee met in February for a presentation of the Developmental Assets Program given by Gina Pin. The ER9 Wellness Advisory Committee met and heard a presentation by Gina Pin on the Developmental Assets Program. The assets include such things as support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies and positive identity.

The Towns of Easton and Redding, through the Easton-Redding Community Coalition would like to administer the survey to high school and possibly middle school students in the fall of 2010. Before the survey is given it will be made available to parents. The survey responses would be anonymous and the results would be shared with the communities. The annual ER9 Recruitment Fair held in March was attended by 101 candidates. Chartwells Food Service representative, Tom O'Donnell, met with high school students to discuss the lunch program.

Director of Financial Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported the following:

- Chartwells' Tom O'Donnell will be at the April meeting to discuss the food service program and discuss a student survey. Mr. Barickman asked that Mr. O'Donnell address the issue of nutritional literacy and advancements in that area.
- Health Insurance claims increased for February, but are still lower than the monthly budgeted amount. The initial renewal increase for next year is high, but is expected to be lowered as the claim history is down, and the stop-loss premium is being reviewed.
- The Budget Object Summary was distributed. The year-to-date areas over budget are the Unemployment Compensation account and Pension Account for non-certified employees.

Superintendent: Dr. Cicchetti provided copies of an article from a recent New York Times magazine entitled Building a Better Teacher. He thanked those coordinating the CMT testing program and commented on the thoroughness of the preparation and oversight involved in the program. Dr. Cicchetti visited JRMS recently and had an opportunity to meet with teachers in team meetings and observed classrooms. He stated the level of parent participants in school activities and meeting is the highest he has ever seen. He also complimented the staff for their attendance at the various meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike D'Agostino, Glen Hill Road: Mr. D'Agostino, commenting on the Bullying Survey, stated that his son, who opted out of the survey at his father's request, was required to write a composition in lieu of participation.

Sara Sobel, Putnam Hill Road: question regarding a modified version of the Bullying Survey for special education students. Mrs. Martin responded that there is no modified version, but the staff adapts or reads the survey for those students who require a modified version.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: move to recess to executive session for A) discussion pertaining to collective bargaining with teachers, and B) discussion related to performance of a municipal employee, Michael T. Cicchetti. Goldberg, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

Dr. Cicchetti and Mrs. Sullivan (first item only) were invited to be present.

The meeting recessed at 8:50 pm.

RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 10:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Recorded by Mary Maday