

REDDING BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING
October 6, 2009

Present: Barickman, Brey, Gaspar, Goldberg, Joyce-Kirk, Lewson, Miller
Administration: Fossbender, Sullivan, Mas, Pierson Ugol, Wessman Huber, Martin, Wallin, Farrell, Freeston
Others: ten members of the staff & community, and a representative of the Redding Pilot.

Mr. Lewson called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: move to approve the revised agenda for the meeting. Goldberg, Joyce-Kirk. Approved. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2009 meeting as corrected. Miller, Gaspar. Approved. 4-0-2. Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Brey abstained.

Correction: page 3, under PTA Liaison Committee, line 2, delete “especially maintenance items.”

PRESENTATION: IN-DISTRICT AUTISM PROGRAM

Mr. Farrell introduced Behavioral Analyst, Mike Soderlund, who presented information on the In-District Autism Program. He described how the program is both supported by the school and supports the school. Discussion and questions followed the presentation.

FACILITIES AND CAPACITY SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman provided review of the subcommittee’s work in the past and the goal going forward. The subcommittee’s recommendation for the re-chartering of the subcommittee with a change in charter aimed at supporting the process and strengthening the alignment with the multiple constituent groups.

Motion: move to re-charter and expand the scope of the original Facilities Utilization and Capacity Subcommittee as the Facility Management Subcommittee, with the scope to include the development and ownership of the District’s long-term facilities improvement plan. The re-chartered subcommittee to consist of four permanent members and one member as needed: two Board of Education members, the Director of Finance and Operations, the Head Custodian, and as needed, one administrator from JRMS or RES. Barickman, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

Mrs. Sullivan reported the following:

1. ARRA GRANTS:

A. State Fiscal Stabilization Fund: the SFSF will be applied to the Town’s ECS grant so that the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 ECS grants will remain at the 2008-2009 level. Approximately 14% of the ECS grant will be funded through SFSF funds. The district will need to report to the State how these funds were spent and how many teaching positions were retained through the use of the funds. The Town of Redding received an ECS grant of \$687,733 for fiscal 2008-2009.

B. IDEA Part B Grant: this grant supports the excess costs of providing special education and related services to students with disabilities and early childhood programs and activities. The district

may use 15% of these funds to support coordinated early intervening services in regular education. The Redding School District will receive \$288,441 to be used in the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. The anticipated use of the IDEA Part B Grant is:

Personnel, .4 Writing Specialist at JRMS, .5 Special Education teacher, .9 Speech & Language Specialist, \$242,000; Professional Development, \$19,000; Consultation and other professional services, \$15,069; Instructional supplies, \$7,944; and Technology (computers and software), \$5,000.

2. Excess Cost funding: Mrs. Sullivan reported the reimbursement rate for fiscal 08-09 was close to 100%. She has been advised the rate for 09-10 will be 70% and the district should budget for 60% for fiscal 10-11.

3. Health Insurance Claims: claims for August were high, but the average of July and August is on track with the budget.

4. Food Service: positive feedback has been received for the new food service vendor. The POS system will be installed in about a month. Mr. Barickman requested the Food Service Subcommittee reconvene for an update on the service and compliance issues, and report to the board at the next meeting.

2009 ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Mr. Farrell presented information on issues with the 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress Report. The school district agreed to participate in a pilot program of modified assessment for special needs students with the understanding that the results would not be added into the calculation of ADP or the scores would be counted as proficient. A change was made at the State level and the scores for students participating in the modified assessment program were included in the calculation for ADP. Redding was listed as deficient in Reading for special needs students. Had the scores not been counted, or counted as proficient, Redding would have met the ADP requirement. Dr. Fossbender has followed up with a letter to the Commissioner of Education regarding the issue.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Redding Elementary School: Mrs. Pearson Ugol reported on school's goals:

- to improve student reading comprehensive and writing
- to improve student ability to solve complex math problems and to explain their thinking
- to improve student demonstration of civic responsibility and an understanding and acceptance of individual differences
- to improve communication between school personnel and the school community in a timely and accurate manner.

John Read Middle School: Mrs. Martin reported on the school's goals:

- to improve student reading comprehensive
- to improve student demonstration of mastery of skills and content
- to improve student demonstration of good character

Redding Special Services: Mr. Farrell reported on the goals:

- students receiving special education services to meet or exceed the objectives identified in their Individualized Education Plans
- student teaching and leaning in special education and early childhood education will be provided in accordance with best practices in identification and instruction of students with disabilities
- students with disabilities will be assimilated with age-appropriate peers to the fullest, most appropriate extent

- students with delays in social development will improve social skills through involvement in social skills groups
- students receiving special education and early childhood education in a preschool setting will be instructed in accordance with best practices as delineated by revised state regulations and policies

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

RES: Mrs. Pierson Ugol reported the traditional open house was held on two nights, one for grades K, 1 and 2, the other for grades 3 and 4. The school celebrated International Peace Day on September 21 with a display of student designed pinwheels on the front lawn of the school.

JRMS: Mrs. Martin reported the new schedule is working well. Students at each grade level are currently involved in a series of study skills lessons. Detailed information has been posted on the school's website.

Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction: Mrs. Mas reported the grade eight ILA teachers will be piloting a writing portfolio program this year. The program is aligned with the Joel Barlow High School's Junior Writing Portfolio Program. Teachers and reading specialists will meet with Jonathan Budd and Jack Powers, JBHS teachers, to review student work using the diagnostic rubric for the first required portfolio writing sample. Mrs. Mas, along with Carrie Wessman Huber, Sally Francia and Sarah Broas will present a two hour session, *Defining the "I" in SRBI: Reciprocal Teaching Across the Content Areas* for the Connecticut Reading Association. Mrs. Mas, Tom McMorran (JBHS) and Mrs. Pierson Ugol attended a focus discussion group sponsored by the Tri-State Consortium. The topic of discussion was to share information related to the structure of the Talented and Gifted Programs in high performing districts.

Superintendent: Dr. Fossbender provided copies of a report on Connecticut Municipal Budget Adoption Experiences FY 2009-2010. Copies of the CAPSS survey regarding impact of budget reductions on programs and class sizes were distributed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gwen Denny, Wayside Lane: thanked the board for considering the potential expansion of the preschool program, requested a status report on the water treatment replacement at both schools, and thanked Mr. Barickman for the report on the Town's Long Range Financial Planning Committee. She commented on the importance of building constituent support between the schools and the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

Frank DeSalvo: commented that the report from the Long Range Financial Planning Committee will go to the Board of Selectmen. He suggested that the capital items also include an estimate of their useful life.

Mary Brannan, Gallows Hill Road: asked how the capital items were determined, who determines the needs and decides if they should be in the operating budget or capital budget, and is the initial list of needs made public.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mr. Barickman commented on the need for an assessment of all textbooks and availability of on-line resources.

Mr. Miller responded to Mrs. Brannan's question regarding the capital items. The annual assessment of facility needs is done by the head custodian in conjunction with the Director of Finance, Mrs. Sullivan.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 10:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Maday, Recording Secretary