

REDDING BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING
December 1, 2009

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

The meeting began with a musical tribute by the John Read Middle School Select Choir honoring the outgoing board officers and in recognition of Dr. Fossbender's retirement.

Dr. Fossbender called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Dr. Fossbender conducted the election of officers and vote by paper ballot.

Motion: move to elect Jess Gaspar as Chairman. Lewson, Goldberg. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to elect Jamie Barickman as Vice Chairman. Gaspar, Joyce-Kirk. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to elect Lewis Brey as Secretary. Barickman, Gaspar. Approved. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2009 meeting as corrected. Barickman, Goldberg. Approved. 5-0-1. Mr. Brey abstained.

Correction: page 1, under Approval of Minutes, Mr. Brey was not present at the November meeting and did not abstain in the vote.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

Mrs. Sullivan reported the following:

- ECS money: the federal portion of the ECS money (\$98,000) for fiscal 2009-2010, went directly to the schools rather than to the Town of Redding. As agreed at the October meeting, the Board of Finance reduced the Board of Education operating budget by the \$98,000 and reduced the Town's income stream by the same amount. This adjustment will be reflected in the budget report; the reduction is specifically in the salary account for Redding Elementary School. Mrs. Sullivan is required to document the specifics of the reduction. The overall effect is a technical accounting adjustment.
- Electricity: Mrs. Sullivan reported the electricity rate has been locked in from 2009-2012 with a consortium of other school districts. The rate is 9.7351/kilowatt hour, lower than the current rate.
- Solar Panels: The Clean Energy solar panels have been installed on the roof of Redding Elementary School. Information on usage and savings will be posted on the website.

- Health Insurance claims: Claims for October were lower than the previous months and lower than the average.
- Power School software: School administrators are undergoing an intensive training session in the new software. Both RES & JRMS will be up and running on January 1, 2010.
- Transportation: Mrs. Sullivan followed up on two issues raised at the PTA Liaison Subcommittee meeting. Two buses were reported as arriving late at JRMS in the morning, and as of now, they are arriving on time. The other issue was an accident causing a delay in students arriving home. Mrs. Sullivan reported the students were uninjured, but detained until another bus and driver could arrive on the scene. The accident occurred at 4 pm, the replacement bus was on scene by 5 pm. Parents were notified of the accident and advised not to go to the scene to pick up their child due to the difficult road topography and emergency vehicles on site.

DANBURY MAGNET SCHOOL

Mr. Brey, an employee of the Danbury School System, did not participate in this discussion.

Dr. Fossbender reported the Board of Trustees for the Magnet School, announced a need to increase tuition rates due to a decrease in funding for the school. Currently, tuition is \$1,500/student, the proposed increase of \$284 bring the tuition to \$1,784/student. Redding currently has 17 students enrolled in the program. Discussion of the increase followed.

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education accept an increase in the tuition for the Danbury Magnet School, not to exceed \$1,784, for the 2010-2011 school year. Barickman, Goldberg. Approved. 5-0. Mr. Brey abstained.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Special Services: Mr. Farrell provided a written report and highlighted the in-service and workshop trainings for the staff.

RES: Mrs. Pierson Ugol provided a written report. She described the various activities/learning experiences that were held to celebrate Veteran's Day.

JRMS: Mrs. Martin submitted a written report and also described the various activities/learning experiences held to honor veterans. She added that students were asked to write letters to members of the military. The 8th grade Immigration Project, an interdisciplinary unit, will include a field trip to Ellis Island and culminate with the creation of an Ellis Island Museum in the JRMS Library. Parents will be invited to tour the museum.

Both Mrs. Pierson Ugol and Mrs. Martin reported that the absentee rate is currently at the usual level. Weekly updates on absentees are available on the website.

Superintendent: Dr. Fossbender reported the Strategic School Profile was available and will be distributed when an error on the report is corrected. Dr. Fossbender reported that a CAFE consultant had completed a review of the board's Policy & Procedure Manual with recommendations for additions or changes. He will meet with the new superintendent with a plan for an orderly review and update of the policies.

As this is Dr. Fossbender's last meeting of the Redding Board of Education, he thanked the Board for their support, vision and advocacy of students. He also thanked the PTAs of both schools, the parents, staff, administrators, Redding Education Foundation and community. Mr. Goldberg responded by thanking Dr. Fossbender for his service to the Town of Redding and the students of Redding. Other board members echoed those sentiments.

AGENDA ADDITION

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education add to the agenda a discussion of superintendent contract negotiations in executive session. Goldberg, Barickman. Approved. Unanimous.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Mrs. Joyce-Kirk reported she and Mr. Lewson met to follow up on the issue of instructional time at Redding Elementary School as discussed at the previous meeting. Mrs. Pierson Ugol is in the process of collecting data from other DRG schools with a breakdown of actual class time, beginning and ending time, passing time, etc. Mrs. Joyce-Kirk added that results of the analysis of the data should not impact the budget or change the hours for the school.

LONG RANGE FINANCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman reported the Committee met to update the list of items on the Long Range Financial Plan. The Plan is currently in review by the Board of Selectmen. The Board will make recommendations on the Town's requests/needs to the Board of Finance. The Board of Education requests/needs move forward as they are listed.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman reported the Committee has two or three names to submit to the Board Chair for appointment as a member-at-large at the next board meeting. He added that an official charge was needed for the committee.

FOOD SERVICE COMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman reported the ad hoc Food Service Committee will meet soon with representatives of Chartwells to review their service.

PTA LIAISON COMMITTEE

Dr. Gaspar reported the topics of discussion at the last meeting:

- Transition: Dr. Gaspar will work with the Chairs of the Region #9 and Easton Boards of Education to plan various meetings/introductions of the new Superintendent to the key decision makers, i.e. PTAs, town officials, etc.
- Resource Officer: the Committee suggested a review of the role of the SRO in the schools with the Chief of Police and the School Resource Officer. This will be planned for a future board meeting.
- Lockdown drill, JRMS: Mrs. Martin reported the lockdown drill was conducted and was very effective. Adjustments in the procedure have been made based on feedback from the drill.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeannie Wendschuh: thanked Dr. Fossbender for his service to the school and community, especially as a leader by example.

Chris Nolan: Mr. Nolan is a parent of a child on the bus involved in the accident. He commented on what he believed was the lack of protocol regarding transportation and the safety of the children. He added that one hour was too long to wait for the substitute bus/driver to get to the scene.

Mary Dale Lancaster: thanked Dr. Fossbender for his leadership and his drive to strive for higher things.

Mike D'Agostino: offered his support for the increase in tuition for the Magnet School, but suggested the board study the continued viability of the program. Mr. D'Agostino also thanked Dr. Fossbender for his commitment to excellence in education.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Move that the Redding Board of Education recess to executive session for a discussion of performance of a public employee, Allen Fossbender, and for a discussion of superintendent contract negotiations. Barickman, Joyce-Kirk. Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting recessed at 9:10 pm.

RECONVENE

The meeting was reconvened in public session at 10:19 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 10:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lewis Brey, Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday