

REDDING BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
September 7, 2010

Present: Barickman, Brey, Gaspar, Goldberg, Joyce-Kirk, Lewson, Miller (arrived at 7:44 pm)
Administration: Cicchetti, Farrell, Freeston, Martin, Mas, Pierson Ugol, Sullivan, Wallin, Wessman
Huber

Others: 11 members of the community and a representative of *The Redding Pilot*

Dr. Gaspar called the September 7, 2010 meeting to order at 7:36 pm in the Community Room of the John Read Middle School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2010 meeting as submitted. Lewson, Joyce-Kirk. Approved. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank DeSalvo, member of the Board of Finance: Congratulated the Board and members of the Redding Facilities Committee for the work done over the summer and hopes there will be a detailed report to acknowledge the work done and to be used as a reference for future projects.

Dana Grey, Lamppost Road: When will the CMT reports be mailed to the parents? Ms. Mas responded that the State Department of Education mailed the reports to the schools later than usual this year. It is anticipated the reports will be mailed to parents by Friday, September 10.

Gwen Denny, Wayside Lane: Seconding Frank DeSalvo's comment; urge Board to continue communication with the parents and the community. More community support if people are kept informed.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Kathleen Joyce-Kirk shared that she attended the ER9 Convocation on August 31, 2010, representing the Redding Board of Education. The convocation was exceptional. She heard from parents, students and teachers that it motivated them to have a wonderful coming school year. The finale included a musical performance with Dr. Cicchetti on the piano and a mixed chorus of students from all schools. Extended kudos to Dr. Cicchetti and administrators who attended the convocation.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE 2011 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHEDULE

Dr. Cicchetti presented the schedule for regular Board meetings for the 2011 calendar year. Mr. Lewson questioned if the calendar should include additional meetings to discuss the budget which usually occur in January/February. Dr. Cicchetti said it only includes regular Board meetings; the scheduling of budget meetings will be discussed later in the fall. Discussion followed pertaining to the November, 2011 meeting, that it not be scheduled on Election Day.

MOTION: Move that the 2011 Redding Board of Education regular meeting schedule be approved as submitted, with one change - the November meeting will be scheduled for November 1, 2011 rather than on Election Day. Barickman, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

REPORT ON SUMMER FACILITES PROJECTS

Jamie Barickman reported on the capital projects that were completed over the summer at both Redding Elementary School and John Read Middle School. He congratulated the committee members (Dan Conlon, Mike D'Agostino, Ken Larkin, Chris Nolan, and Peggy Sullivan) for their committed dedication to quality of the output, outstanding fiscal responsibility, staying on schedule, on time and on budget. *Community involvement doesn't get any better than this.* (Certificates of appreciation were presented to the parents on the committee: Conlon, D'Agostino, and Nolan.) Dr. Cicchetti commented that their contributions are lasting and represent a tremendous amount of work.

Peggy Sullivan provided a detailed report updating the Capital Projects and giving the status as of September 1, 2010. The report is posted on the Redding Board of Education page of the Central Office Web site (www.er9.org).

Jess Gaspar commented there were many other members of the community, including the PTA, involved in the projects. Peggy Sullivan thanked the custodial staff at both schools.

Ed Miller reminded the Board of a capital item deferred to next year which is the sewage treatment project.

NUTRITION STUDY FOR GRADE 4

Marie Mas introduced Molly Basak-Smith, a registered dietician and member of the ER9 Wellness Advisory Committee since its inception. Ms. Basak-Smith is working in partnership with Cornell University Food and Brand Lab and Chartwells Food Services to study ways in which to guide students to make healthier food choices. Ms. Basak-Smith presented the study which will involve two fourth-grade classrooms from both Easton and Redding. Redding will be the control group, and Easton will be the study group. Students in the study group will receive nutritional report cards which will be sent home to the parents. The Point of Sale program can track what the students purchase. A description of the program and permission forms will be sent home to the parents.

Ms. Bask-Smith spoke of research done on designing school lunchrooms to "nudge" students to choose healthier foods (refer to smarterlunchrooms.org).

Mr. Barickman asked about Chartwells' cooperation and integration. Mrs. Basak-Smith said Chartwells is being very cooperative.

MOTION: Mr. Goldberg moved that a Public Comment be added at the end of the Nutrition Study for Grade 4 presentation. Goldberg, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

Discussion followed on the Nutrition Study, including clarification that data would not be collected on any student without parental consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beth Lewson, Drummer Lane: Stated the study tracks purchases but not consumption. How does that teach the fourth graders good nutrition? Mrs. Basak-Smith responded it is understood the student may give the purchased food to another student. The study would correct for this possibility. The study will provide information to the parents on what the student purchases.

Megan Valentine, Drummer Lane: Questioned if the study accounts for students who do not purchase lunch every day. Ms. Basak-Smith said that information would also be tracked.

Mike D'Agostino, Drummer Lane: Commented it is great to do whatever we can to influence our children to eat healthier foods but wondered about restricting children too much and what happens when the student goes off to college where there are no restrictions and eats junk food. Ms. Basak-Smith responded that the purpose is to use a combination of psychology and behavior economics to catch the students at an age when you can have an impact, enough so that when they do go to college they will make better choices.

Board members complimented Mrs. Basak-Smith on her efforts.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2009-2010

Peggy Sullivan presented a report on significant budget variances which resulted in a budget surplus of \$215,377 which represents approximately 1% of the overall budget. Recommendation was made to distribute the budget surplus as follows: \$65,377 to the health insurance reserve and return \$150,000 to the Town of Redding. Discussion followed, including the protocol established with the Board of Finance to return surplus funds to the town with the exception of funds that could be added to the health care reserve. Mr. Barickman applauded Mrs. Sullivan on her management of the budget and for protecting the health insurance reserve.

MOTION: Move to approve the proposed distribution of the 2009-2010 operating budget surplus of \$215,377 as follows: \$65,377 to health care reserve; \$150,000 return to the Town of Redding. Barickman, Brey. Approved. Unanimous.

DISCUSSION ON OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2010-2011

Peggy Sullivan reported on the 2010-2011 budget, including the savings of \$126,416 in the salary line which resulted from a discrepancy in the teacher contract. Mr. Brey clarified that the reason the budget was at a higher amount was due to a mistake in the teacher contract document, the anticipated expenses were budgeted based on the written contract. Discussion followed on keeping the surplus in the budget with the expectation that it will be returned to the Town of Redding at the end of June, 2011 absent extraordinary circumstances. Dr. Cicchetti said that our assurance to the Board of Finance will be that the budget will not be monitored any less carefully than it usually is.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

RES Principal, Stephanie Pierson Ugol, welcomed Carrie Wessman Huber back from maternity leave. She reported there was a terrific beginning to the school year. Everyone is thrilled with the upgrades to the school. Mrs. Pierson Ugol reported on math differentiation curriculum, flexibly grouping students, personalizing the learning experience, and significant gains in achievement. Parent informational sessions will be given on this new math model.

JRMS Principal, Diane Martin, reported the students and staff are excited about the improvements to the sixth-grade wing. She reported on the two professional development days prior to the start of school which focused on data analysis and instructional implications, and bystander intervention focused on the "taking care" theme.

Director of Special Services, Brian Farrell, reported on a two-day RAVE-O (a scientific research-based intervention program developed by Tufts University) Reading workshop that was held over the summer at JRMS at a cost-savings to the district. Cheryl Freeston, Supervisor of Special

Services, reported on the five-week Extended School Year program that took place during the summer with 90 students attending.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Marie Mas, reported that the Science Curriculum Committee met for three days over the summer working on recommendations made as a result of the Tri-State Consortium science visit. In particular, the committee worked on creating performance-based assessments in grades K-12. The ILA Curriculum Committee met to discuss changes to the State's Core Curriculum Standards, review of CMT results and action plans, and work on the Grade 8 Writing Portfolio. Ms. Mas also reported on the status of the new beginning teacher program, TEAM, and on her participation in the Strategic Planning sessions. She reported that 17 Redding students are enrolled for the current school year at the AIS Magnet School in Danbury.

Director of Finance, Peggy Sullivan, reported auditors have arrived at Central Office to do the year-end audit for which a report will be issued in November. She reported that the transportation contract will go out to bid this year, for which a Board member will be needed as a committee representative. Lewis Brey volunteered to be on the committee. Board members commented there have not been many reported bus issues. Mrs. Sullivan said there have been some issues, especially related to the software program the bus company uses to establish bus routes. She and Dr. Cicchetti complimented Eva Colligan, on her handling of bus routes and holding the bus company accountable as well as for her responsiveness to parent concerns.

Superintendent Michael Cicchetti welcomed back Carrie Wessman Huber and noted that she is in the final stages of her doctorate program. Dr. Cicchetti reported that he and Marie Mas both visited all the schools on opening day. He acknowledged the work of the administrators, custodians, and the support staff during the summer renovation projects. He reported on the Strategic Planning sessions that occurred over the summer and provided draft documents on work done. Further information will be provided at a Tri-Board meeting later in September. A CMT report will be provided at the October Board of Education meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Brannan, Gallows Hill Road: Question about the Strategic Planning Action Plan Teams. Are there four teams in each town, or each of the teams will have representatives from both towns? Dr. Gaspar replied it would be the latter.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education meeting be adjourned. Goldberg, Barickman. Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lewis Brey, Board Secretary

Recorded by Vicki Cram