

REDDING BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
September 6, 2011

Present

Redding Board of Education: Barickman, Brey, Gaspar, Goldberg (9:05 pm), Joyce-Kirk, Lewson
Administration: Josefsberg, Sullivan, Cram
School administrators: Pierson Ugol, Wessman Huber, Martin, Wallin, Farrell, Freeston
Others: eight members of the communities & representatives of the Redding Pilot and Patch.com

Dr. Gaspar called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm in the Redding Elementary School Library

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education accept the minutes of the June 7, 2011 meeting as submitted. Lewson, Joyce-Kirk. Approved, 4-0-1. Mr. Brey abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank DeSalvo, Redding: Mr. DeSalvo thanked those who worked so hard to get the school renovations completed and ready for school to open on schedule.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Joyce-Kirk thanked all the JRMS and RES students who helped with the Mark Twain Library Book Fair.

Mr. Barickman acknowledged and thanked the administration, Central Office staff and project team (Mike D'Agostino, Chris Nolan and Dan Conlon) for the work on the school renovations, completing the project on time and on budget.

Dr. Gaspar welcomed Dr. Josefsberg to the board and school system.

REPORT ON SUMMER FACILITIES PROJECTS

Those present were taken on a brief tour of the school to view the accomplishments of the summer project, including the Kindergarten wing, the gymnasium and the 1948 wing. The Project Committee members, Dan Conlon, Mike D'Agostino and Chris Nolan, highlighted the changes that were made. More work was accomplished than the original scope of work as a result of several of the bids coming in lower than anticipated. Mike D'Agostino was acknowledged for oversight of the actual work being done at both the schools.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Webmaster Vicki Cram reviewed the need for improvements/changes for the school website. Three website vendors, Finalsite, Edline and PowerIT, are being considered. Demonstrations of the three are scheduled for the week of September 19 at Central office for viewing by board members, administrators and those interested in viewing them. Mrs. Cram noted that the objective is to provide a more unified approach for the websites for the Central Office and each of the five district schools. In addition, there is a need for replacement of the Listserv function, a desire to provide a customizable calendar, a need for teacher website improvements, and a need to integrate with PowerSchool. A more unified website will also assist with the centralization of functions of the three districts.

Mr. Barickman asked if any of the products have the capability for online learning or virtual school potential. Mrs. Cram noted that following the demonstrations, she will do a cost analysis and will report back to the school

board at the October or November meeting. Each of the vendors has indicated a lead time for implementation of two months.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Redding Elementary School: Principal Pierson Ugol reported on a terrific school opening day. Current enrollment is 608, close to the projected number. Meetings were held at each grade level to welcome students back to school. Students and staff will continue work on PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) throughout the year.

John Read Middle School: Principal Diane Martin reported enrollment is 591, slightly above the projected number. Students were welcomed back to school and grade level meetings were held to review policies and talk about the school theme of "Taking Care". Open house for fifth grade parents is planned this year for September 14, and open house for 6/7/8 grade parents is scheduled for September 22.

Special Services: Director Brian Farrell reviewed current enrollment and anticipates some additions as a result of students new to the system. These new students are currently being evaluated for planning and placement.

Director of Finance & Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported that Health Insurance claims for the past year averaged \$240,000, close to budget, and the Reserve Account is currently at \$533,000, about two months of claims. The unexpended year balance, subject to audit, is \$226,000 (\$126,000 from the salary adjustment and \$100,000 from operations), and that was returned to the Town of Redding. Mrs. Sullivan anticipates savings in the current year budget of \$75,000 in electricity costs, \$25,000 savings from the bus lease agreement, and \$20,000 from a new contract for refuse collections as a result of collaboration with the Town of Redding. Mrs. Sullivan anticipates shortfalls in the budget in the area of heating oil and diesel fuel of \$45,000. This is based on anticipated pricing although the consortium has not yet locked in prices. In addition, the pension contribution for non-certified employees was increased from 9 ½% to 11 ½%, for an additional cost of about \$25,000. Transportation for the first day of school had some weather related issues. Some of the roads were difficult due to storm damage, and the drivers did not have the opportunity to test drive the routes due to the hurricane tree damage and road closings. About 1/3 of the previous drivers were retained by DATTCO.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Ms. McPadden was not present, but Dr. Josefsberg highlighted her written report. Ms. McPadden will be a presenter at an international educational symposium in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in October. The Reciprocal Teaching Model, a research-based reading instructional model will be the focus of the presentation. The ER9 Curriculum Alignment Steering Committee participated in a webinar facilitated by the Atlas/Rubicon consultant. Dr. Michael Hibbard facilitated a training session in June for social studies and science teachers, and will provide another in the fall for music, art, language arts and math teachers. In addition, summer work included Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM Program, Grade Eight Writing Portfolio, ER9Science Notebook/Journal Committee and Connecticut Assessment Forum.

Superintendent: Dr. Josefsberg announced the appointment of Stefan Pryor as the Commissioner of Education for Connecticut. Dr. Josefsberg commented on the improvements in both school facilities and the cooperation to get the schools open on time. Hurricane Irene had an impact on school opening and operations in general, but especially with communication with the schools, staff, and communities. The staff convocation was cancelled, but Dr. Josefsberg distributed copies of his intended speech via email.

RESOURCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman noted that certified staff contract negotiations are moving along nicely. Another meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 8, 2011.

FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Mr. Barickman anticipates a final summation of the building project and financial review for an upcoming meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank DeSalvo, Mountain Road: Mr. DeSalvo suggested the board use microphones for future meetings; the discussions were difficult to hear at this meeting. (The meetings held at JRMS are normally set up with microphones)

Mike D'Agostino, Glen Hill Road, Redding; Mr. D'Agostino recommended that the board consider converting JRMS to the DDC (Direct Digital Control) for the heating system, as was done at RES during the summer project. The estimated cost to convert JRMS is \$120,000.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Brey will recuse himself from the Executive Session (discussion of negotiations) as he is involved in negotiations with the Weston Board of Education.

Mr. Barickman asked how the 3-day delay in opening schools would impact the school calendar. Dr. Josefsberg noted that the three days would be added to the calendar in June, in accordance with decisions made when the current calendar was approved. *(Additional days will be added to the end of the school year for emergency closings up to and including Friday, June 22. Any additional days will be taken in the following order: 1. April vacation, beginning with Monday, April 16; 2. February vacation, beginning with Tuesday, February 21**;*
3. June 25-29.)

Mr. Barickman suggested the board have a discussion of Central Office staffing, from the standpoint that the workload at Central Office is greater than what can be accomplished at the current staffing level. Dr. Gaspar indicated that this was one of the issues that the Structure and Ways of Working Committee was working on. That Committee is scheduled to meet to review the recommendations and make decisions on which should move forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: move to recess to executive session for a discussion of negotiations with the Redding Education Association. Barickman, Lewson. Approved. Unanimous.

Dr. Josefsberg and Mrs. Sullivan were invited to be present. Mrs. Pierson Ugol and Mrs. Martin were asked to be present for the beginning of the discussion.

The meeting recessed at 9:00 pm.

Mr. Brey left the meeting, 9:00 pm

Mr. Goldberg arrived at 9:05 pm

RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 9:50 pm, No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm

Recorded by Mary Maday