

Region 9 Board of Education District Hearing
Minutes
Joel Barlow High School - Auditorium
April 5, 2010

Filed subject to approval

Attendance: Lewis, Gombos, Hooker, Neidenbach, Logie, Macchio
Administration: Cicchetti, Sullivan, McMorran
Four members of the public

Mr. Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Public Comment

During public comment, Mrs. Kim Breda (head of the JBHS PTSA) noted her personal support for the budget passed by Region 9 and the subject of the district meeting.

Presentation of Proposed 2010-2011 Operating Budget for Joel Barlow High School/Region 9 School District

Chairman Mark Lewis then had hard copies of a budget overview distributed to members of the audience. Chairman Lewis then highlighted specific details of the printed presentation noting the following:

- A public vote on the Region 9 budget is scheduled for Tuesday May 4, 2010.
- The total proposed Region 9 budget for the 2010/2011 school year is \$21,212,212.
- The proposed budget is 2.76% higher than the current 2009/2010 Region 9 budget.
- The majority of the year-on-year budget increase is driven by contractual teacher salaries, off-site tuition to provide special education services to Region 9 students, and an increase in the cost of bus transportation.
- Chairman Lewis highlighted the downward trend in servicing Region 9 debt over the past several years as building project bonds are paid down and/or refinanced.
- Chairman Lewis highlighted the trend in ER9 enrollment, which is contracting for K-5 this year, peaking at our middle schools, and will remain close to current levels at JBHS for another 5-6 years (based on current K-8 enrollment and demographic projections which are documented in the current Region 9 budget book).
- Chairman Lewis highlighted cutbacks embedded in the 2010/2011 budget, to include the elimination of a non-certified position, the reduction of the full-time literacy specialist (a position vacated by retirement and not to be filled during the 2010/2011 school year – with services to be provided by in-house staff and outside specialists), reductions in staff hours for curriculum development and staff development, and deferring replacement of computers.

Public Comment

A member of the public asked for clarification regarding cutbacks in curriculum development and was assured that no program cuts were to be made in math or science. The budget cuts in this area were related to curriculum development and staff development and would not change the math/science program of study for the 2010/2011 school year.

A member of the public asked if the shift toward organic field maintenance would have an impact on the budget. The Region 9 Facilities Manager, Walter Czudak, noted that some aspects of organic pest control and fertilization were more expensive, but that these costs were being offset by cost savings in other portions of the maintenance budget. Both Mr. Czudak and Head of School, Thomas McMorrان, assured the audience that JBHS was moving as quickly as possible toward a “green” organic approach toward the improvement and maintenance of Region 9 fields and outdoor green areas.

Motion: move to adjourn the meeting. Gombos, Macchio. Approved. Unanimous.

Mr. Lewis adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

After the formal close of the meeting, it was noted that the old tennis court perimeter fencing had been removed by New England Building and Excavating (which completed the work gratis for Region 9). As a result, a potential safety hazard has been eliminated. Next steps related to the future development of this site as a grass practice area may be discussed at the next Region 9 Fields and Facilities meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday April 13th at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Logie, Secretary, Board of Education