

REGION #9 BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 19, 2010

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Baker, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Macchio, Neidenbach

Administration: Cicchetti, Mas, Sullivan, McMorrان, Kipp, Pin

Student Representative: Murphy

Others: three in the audience and a representative of the Redding Pilot/Easton Courier

Mr. Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm in Room B109.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2009 meeting as submitted.

Gombos, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to approve the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the boards on January 7,

2010 as submitted. Karvelis, Macchio. Approved, 7-0-1. Hocker abstained.

STUDENT REPORT

Student Representative, Hailey Murphy, reported on the first day of final exams and the completion of senior synthesis papers in the week past. Students are completing end of semester teacher evaluations. In addition she mentioned MSG will be taping the boys' varsity basketball game this evening which is to air Friday, January 22nd.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Mrs. Gombos mentioned that the Writing Center is busy this week assisting juniors with their writing portfolios that are due next week.

BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

The committee assignment list was distributed and reviewed.

Curriculum (Standing): Gombos, Lewis, Logie, Hocker

ER9 Wellness: Hocker

Facilities & Fields (Standing): Hocker, Neidenbach, Macchio, Karvelis, Baker

Financial Oversight (Standing): Hocker, Gombos, Karvelis and community members Fred Knopf, Frank DeSalvo, Joe Hanczor, Claire Gold, Bobbie Cable

Technology: Logie, Baker

Negotiations: Gombos, Hocker, Logie

Pension (Standing): Karvelis, Logie and community members David Boczar and Jeanne Wendschuh

Policy (Standing): Neidenbach, Macchio

Superintendent Evaluation: Lewis, Gombos

Transportation: Lewis, Baker
Food Service: Hocker

AGENDA CHANGE

Motion: move to change the agenda moving #10, New Communications Committee to the next item for discussion 6A. Gombos, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.

NEW COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Karvelis and Dr. Baker will review the charge of the previous Communications Committee; discuss the goals of a communications committee and present suggestions/recommendations to the full board at the February meeting.

SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES, TO- DATE

Director of Special Education, Patti Roszko, and Department Chair, Cheri Shutt, were present to review the current special education expenditures. Ms. Roszko reported she is optimistic the department expenditures will meet budget at the end of the year. The “excess cost” reimbursement monies are expected in February and May, and the district will receive reimbursements for six students. The anticipated reimbursement rate is between 70% & 80%. Open issues include a mediation cost and a due process cost.

EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE FOR TEACHERS

Mr. Lewis received a letter from the Joel Barlow Education Association requesting that the board consider an early retirement incentive. In the past few years, the same request from the JBEA was considered and declined. Dr. Cicchetti commented that the risk of losing outstanding staff members outweighs the financial benefit. Other members of the board expressed the same feelings.

Motion: move that the Board of Education direct the Chair to send the JBEA a letter declining the request for an early retirement incentive this year. Karvelis, Macchio. Approved. Unanimous.

BUDGET PROCESS MEETING SCHEDULE

The dates of upcoming meetings and budget workshops were reviewed. The March 4, 2010 date conflicts with the Redding Board of Finance Public Hearing on the budget and Mr. Lewis suggested the date for the Region #9 budget workshop be changed. The meeting was changed to March 8, 2010 at 7:00 PM. The proposed budget will be presented at the regular meeting scheduled for February 23, 2010. Budget workshops are scheduled for March 8 and March 11.

Board members were given an opportunity to voice expectations for the proposed budget. Most voiced a concern about the uncertainty of the economy and preference for a small increase. Dr. Baker added that, even with a flat budget, Easton will see an increase due to the enrollment shift.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. McMorran reported on work being done on transition and vertical alignments with the two middle schools. Mrs. Kipp prepared a grid presentation to show the various activities/planning in place. Mr. McMorran also reported that a retired math teacher is working on a volunteer basis

with sophomores identified at risk of not meeting goal on the upcoming CAPT test. In addition, a long-term substitute is working with students in the science area, and other retired English teachers are working with students in the English/reading areas. The administration is working with the Joel Barlow Parent Teacher Student Association to improve communications with parents. One staff member has notified the Superintendent of intended retirement at the end of the year and Mr. McMorrان does not believe there will be others.

Mrs. Mas reported the Tri-State Consortium Visitation evaluation will be reviewed by the superintendent and steering committee members, and then shared with the boards of education. Mrs. Mas reported the Easton and Redding writing and reading specialists, and Mary Ann Sheehy, Dean of Students at JBHS, met to focus on the Developmental Reading Assessment-2. The program assists with reading instruction with students demonstrating weaknesses in decoding, word identification, fluency and reading comprehension. Mrs. Sheehy participated in improving the transition process between the middle schools and the high school. The ER9 Wellness Committee awarded the first year of the Chartwells Nutrition Grant (\$2,000/year for 5 years/5 schools) to Samuel Staples Elementary School for work in the development of the community garden planned for the school.

Director Of Finance & Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported on the following:

1. ARRA /Energy Efficiency grants: The first layer of grants is available to towns and the second layer is available to regional groups. Mrs. Sullivan submitted the regional grant application for a potential of \$110,000, and should hear by the end of March if the grant will be awarded. The grant would be used to replace two very large hot water heaters with smaller on-demand systems.
2. Health insurance claims for December were \$138,000, holding at average/budgeted amount.
3. Solar Panels: Mr. McMorrان has asked the Director of Building and Grounds to assess whether the roof could support a solar panel installation.
4. Lighting: exterior lighting will be retrofitted for a more efficient lighting.

Superintendent Cicchetti thanked the board for a warm welcome to the district. He has met with many staff members and plans to meet with the parent organizations and various members of the Easton and Redding communities. He commented that the program for transition from grade 8 to grade 9 is very impressive.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Mr. Hocker reported the committee met prior to this meeting. Mrs. Sullivan reported the planned refinancing of the 2002 bond is moving forward, is expected to be settled in the next month and could save \$250,000 over a 10 year period. She added that the short term debt of \$1,670,000 will be converted to long term financing in July.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Lewis, on behalf of the Connecticut Debate Association, thanked Joel Barlow High School for hosting a recent debate tournament.

Mr. Karvelis commented that during the recent campaign a frequent comment/concern was expressed about what was being done at the high school for the “kid in the middle” or the kids

not going on to college. He suggested the board review that category of student and how they are being served.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William A. Baker
Secretary, Region #9 Board of Education

Recorded by Mary Maday