

REGION #9 BOARD OF EDUCATION  
December 15, 2009  
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Baker, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Macchio, Neidenbach  
Administration: Fossbender, Mas, Sullivan, McMorran, Kipp  
Student Representative: Murphy  
Others: 10 in the audience

Mrs. Gombos called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm in Room B109.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Dr. Fossbender collected the paper ballots of each vote and announced each result.

**Motion: move to elect Mark Lewis as Chairman. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move to elect Catherine Gombos as Vice Chairman. Karvelis, Lewis. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move to elect Christopher Hocker as Treasurer. Gombos, Neidenbach. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move to elect William Baker as Secretary. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

**AGENDA CHANGE**

**Motion: move to amend the agenda, moving item #10, Discussion and Action on a new course, to follow item #7. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2009 meeting as corrected. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. 6-0-2. Macchio and Baker abstained.**

Correction: page 1, under Public Comment, Mrs. Joyce's comment, change board of education to Board of Education.

**STUDENT REPORT**

Student Representative, Hailey Murphy announced the postponed Homecoming Dance was very successful and well attended. The Student Council Convocation is planned for December 16. The goal of the convocation is to foster student-teacher relationships.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Mrs. Gombos commented on the wonderful evening of tribute to Dr. Fossbender and the number of people who gathered to honor him.

## **TUITION STUDENT FOR ATTENDANCE AT REGIONAL CENTER FOR THE ARTS (RCA)**

Dr. Fossbender explained that two freshmen students elected to attend the Regional Center for the Arts (RCA), but were not informed of the tuition charge. The new RCA Principal did not inform the parents of the two students that there was a tuition cost of \$2,350/student. Dr. Fossbender added that the district has not historically paid the tuition and there are currently two other students attending the school.

Dr. Fossbender recommended that Region #9 pay the tuition of the four students for the 09-10 school year, but with the stipulation that the action does not set a precedent. He further suggested that the board discuss the issue philosophically at a future meeting.

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education approve the payment of tuition for the four students attending the Regional Center for the Arts for the 2009-2010 school year, at a cost of \$2,350 each or a total of \$9,400, with no precedent expressed or implied. Hocker, Karvelis.**

Discussion followed. Mrs. Gombos suggested that the RCA be approached for a negotiated tuition because of a lack of communication of the tuition verbally or in writing. She also suggested the Easton schools were negligent by not including information regarding the tuition cost when speaking with the students and their parents.

**Motion: move to table the motion. Gombos, Baker. Approved. Unanimous.**

One of the parents, Mrs. Gina Cocchia, was present and addressed the board. She assumed there was no tuition cost for the program and hopes the Board of Education can resolve the issue. Her daughter is doing well in the program and enjoys the experience.

## **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

The Curriculum Committee reviewed, discussed, and recommended the approval of a new course entitled Film Literacy. Teachers Chris Angel and Cheryl Horton provided an overview of the class content and answered questions from the board members.

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education approve the film studies course, Film Literacy, using the textbook, Beginning Film Studies by Andrew Dix, for the 2010-11 school year. Gombos, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.**

## **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

The current list of committee assignments was distributed. Board members are to contact Chairman Lewis regarding interest in vacancies on the committees. The assignments will be finalized at the January meeting.

## **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS**

Mrs. Sullivan reported on the following:

1. Health insurance claims are trending downward, with October claims of \$105,174.
2. Year-to-date financials are tracking as expected.
3. Electricity: the contract, through a consortium, for 12/09 to 12/12 was finalized with a rate slightly lower than the current rate.

4. Heating oil: the current contract cost is \$2.45/gallon. The consortium is waiting for the oil prices to drop before extending the contract.
5. Refinancing: the board's advisor, Matt Spoerndle, expects the refinancing package to be completed in January.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Mrs. Mas reported the Tri-State Consortium visitation report was received. The report will be shared with the steering committee, then the information will be shared with the ER9 Boards of Education, administrators and all certified staff, and be used for possible revisions to the science curriculum.

Mrs. Mas also reported the writing portfolio work between the 8<sup>th</sup> grade ILA teachers and those at Barlow is going very well. A diagnostic rubric for scoring the writing samples has been developed for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade work. Mrs. Mas provided a presentation for the December faculty meeting that focused on strategies to improve reading comprehension, including text organization, glossing, and anticipation guides.

Mr. McMorran presented his written report, Noteworthy News. He highlighted the achievement of Caity Van Camp who was selected as the Connecticut Coca-Cola Player of the Year at the Girls' Volleyball All-State banquet. In addition, Mr. McMorran reported students participated in a Spanish exchange with Danbury High School. Staff is working with the two middle schools on transition and placement of 8<sup>th</sup> graders in science and math courses.

Dr. Fossbender reported on the following:

1. Policy Manual: a suggested process for policy update/revision was reviewed. The process will provide an orderly and efficient manner for policy review. Policy review will begin in the Policy Committee and recommendations will be presented to the full board.
2. State Department of Education, Race to the Top grant information; information on the nationwide grant, Race to the Top, was presented. The State Dept. of Education is seeking approval of the boards of education for participation in the grant process. The benefit to the Region #9 Board is \$7,000, with Easton's benefit at \$13,000 and Redding's at \$16,000. No action was taken at this time.
3. Settlement Update: the CAFE update on settlements of administrator and teacher contracts was distributed.
4. Dr. Fossbender thanked the board members for their dedication to the school and work to advance the standards of the school. He commented on his experiences over the past eleven years in his role as Principal and as the Superintendent of Schools. He added that he is comforted by the achievements over the years and that those currently sitting on the board will continue to move the standards forward.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: He commented on the need to support the school's drama program. Mr. D'Agostino requested a presentation or review of the effectiveness of the School Climate Project. He also thanked Dr. Fossbender for his service and ability to keep the needs of the students paramount.

Peter Bonfanti, Redding: Mr. Bonfanti commented on the magical evening honoring Dr. Fossbender and thanked him for his dedication to education.

Julia Pemberton, Redding: commented that Dr. Fossbender is the finest individual she has ever known and that his character will continue to inspire all.

Jeannie Wendschuh, Redding: thanked Dr. Fossbender for his leadership of the school community and that he led by example.

The meeting recessed at 9:02 pm.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education recess to executive session for discussion of performance of municipal employees: Lisa Oakley, Peggy Sullivan, Allen Fossbender and E. Marie Mas. Gombos, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.**

At 9:05 pm, Executive Session began. In attendance: all Region 9 BOE members, Dr. Fossbender and Mr. McMorran were invited to attend.

At 9:45 pm, Dr. Fossbender and Mr. McMorran left the executive session.

At 9:57 pm, Dr. Fossbender returns.

At 10:05 pm, Mr. McMorran returns.

#### **RECONVENE**

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 10:12 pm.

**Motion: move to provide stipends to the Director of Finance & Operations and to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in recognition for the additional work hours they will incur in facilitating the transition of the new Superintendent in the coming months as follows:**

**\$1,500 to the Director of Finance and Operations and  
\$1,500 to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction**

**Karvelis, Neidenbach. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

William A. Baker, Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday