

Filed subject to approval

Easton, Redding & Region 9 Boards of Education
Joint Board Meeting
January 25, 2011
Minutes

Attendance:

Easton Board of Education: Dunsby, Peskay, Bobroske, Underberger (by phone), Allan, Maiorano
Redding Board of Education: Barickman, Gaspar, Miller, Joyce-Kirk, Lewson. (absent: Goldberg, Brey)
Region 9 Board of Education: Abrams, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Shapiro (absent: Macchio)
Administration: Cicchetti, Mas, Sullivan
Others: ten members of the community and representatives of the Redding Pilot/Easton & Patch.com

Chairman of the Region 9 Board of Education, Mark Lewis, chaired the meeting. All three of the boards had a quorum in attendance and each board was called to order at 7:40 pm in the Media Center at Joel Barlow High School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 21, 2010 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Shapiro. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 21, 2010 meeting as submitted. Lewson, Barickman. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 21, 2010 meeting as submitted. Bobroske, Peskay. Approved. 5-0-1. Maiorano abstained.

Motion approved.

CENTRAL OFFICE BUDGET 2011-2012

The administration's proposed budget for Central Office was presented. The proposed budget, \$1,599,102 represents a 2.26% increase over the current budget. Mrs. Sullivan recommended a reduction of \$12,000 in the Health Insurance line based on more recent data/recommendation. The reduction brings the budget to \$1,587,102, or a 1.49% increase over the current budget.

The proposed budget includes no change in the superintendent position salary, a placeholder for a 3% increase for the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations, and a 2% increase for the nine support staff, differentiated for two staff members.

Other items discussed:

- Movie licensing fee: the copyright fee for all three districts for showing educational films related to curriculum
- Copier fees: the lease was negotiated last year
- Pension funding (non-certificated staff): the budget includes the actuarial recommended increase. The total unfunded portion is \$576,000 (as of 6/30/10). The account is funded approximately 80%. Discussion of increasing the budget for the pension fund followed. The Region 9 Pension Committee is meeting next week to review the quarterly report. They note that there has been a significant gain in the portfolio value since 6/30/10. Mr. Karvelis will share that information with

the Chairs of the three boards following the 1/31/11 Pension Committee meeting. There was agreement to stay with the recommended Central Office pension contribution.

- Legal costs: these are costs related to issues across all districts or those that cannot be attributed to a specific school/student.
- Computer expenses: the expense is for an upgrade of servers and a centralization of back-up systems and email.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the proposed budget of \$1,587,102 for Central Office as discussed. Karvelis, Shapiro. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education approve the proposed budget of \$1,587,102 for the Central Office as discussed. Barickman, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the proposed budget of \$1,587,102 for the Central Office as discussed. Allan, Bobroske. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion approved.

ER9 STRUCTURE AND WAYS OF WORKING COMMITTEE

Dr. Gaspar reported the first meeting of the Committee is scheduled for February 3, 2011. Members of the Committee include: Dr. Gaspar for Redding Board of Education; Mr. Hocker and Mr. Logie for Region 9 Board of Education; Dr. Dunsby for Easton Board of Education; Julia Pemberton for Redding Board of Selectmen; William Alvarez for Redding Board of Finance; Sharon Stemme for Easton Board of Selectmen.

The initial charge for the Committee included a conclusion and report to the Tri-Board by March 31, 2011. Dr. Gaspar suggested that date be extended since the Committee is just beginning their work. Discussion of the Committee purpose and the March 31 deadline followed. Following that discussion, a motion to extend the deadline was made.

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education approve extending the March 31, 2011 report deadline for the ER9 Structure and Ways of Working Committee 60 days or until the next Tri-Board meeting. Miller, Joyce-Kirk. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve extending the March 31, 2011 report deadline for the ER9 Structure and Ways of Working Committee 60 days or until the next Tri-Board meeting. Hocker, Karvelis. Approved. 5.11 – 1.78. Mr. Logie and Mrs. Gombos voted against the motion.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve extending the March 31, 2011 report deadline for the ER9 Structure and Ways of Working Committee 60 days or until the next Tri-Board meeting. Peskay, Allan. Approved. 5-1. Mr. Maiorano voted against the motion.

Motion approved.

***To clarify: Note that these motions were intended to allow a report to be made at the end of May (if a Tri-Board meeting could be arranged at that time) or for the first Tri-Board meeting that can be arranged after May 31st.**

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE

Mr. Karvelis is serving as chair of the Search Screening Subcommittee. Also on the Screening Committee are Mrs. Gombos for Region 9, Dr. Underberger and Mrs. Peskay for Easton Board of Education and Mr. Miller and Mr. Barickman for Redding Board of Education.

Mr. Karvelis reported a contract is in place with Eliza Holcomb, search consultant for CABA. Ms. Holcomb was used in the previous search, and based on that contract if the individual leaves or retires within one year, there is no fee (with the exception of expenses) for an additional search.

A draft of the official vacancy announcement, agenda and timetable were reviewed. The vacancy announcement is to be finalized by the end of the week. Ms. Holcomb has begun interviews of Dr. Cicchetti and Dr. Fossbender. The Committee plans a public meeting on March 14, 2011 to solicit community suggestions and thoughts. The goal of the Committee is to hire a superintendent to begin work July 1, 2011. Plans for an interim placement are being developed.

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER FOR THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR

The Transportation Committee was composed of Dr. Peskay for the Easton Board of Education, Mr. Macchio for the Region 9 Board of Education, Mr. Brey for the Redding Board of Education and Eva Colligan, Central Office Business Manager, and Mrs. Sullivan.

The RFP (Request for Proposals) resulted in four firms submitting bids for transportation services. The field was narrowed to two firms (Dattco Inc. and First Student) for interviews. The Committee completed reviews of the proposals and interviews with the two finalists companies, and their recommendation was to accept the proposal from Dattco Inc.

Mrs. Sullivan recapped some of the reasons for the selection of Dattco, including a bigger back-up system for replacement buses, an in-house repair facility, a willingness to solve problems in a timely manner, suggestions for improvement of service and overall lower cost package. Mrs. Sullivan reported the recommendations from New Canaan and Westport were very good. Dattco's home office is in New Britain. The contract is for five years, with a 2 ½% increase per year which is an industry standard. Options for seat belts, video cameras and GPS will be discussed in the negotiation phase.

Dr. Peskay noted that the firm is locally owned & developed company, their presentation was good, and they offered specific answers to questions provided.

Mr. Logie asked where Dattco would yard the buses. Mrs. Sullivan noted that they expected to secure a yard location in Bethel, but were open to housing the buses in Easton or Redding. Mrs. Sullivan reported there is some interest in the bus depot in Easton and that is being explored further.

Board members expressed a desire to have the new firm rehire current drivers who know the children and the existing routes. Mrs. Sullivan indicated that Dattco intends to interview the current staff, and she is hopeful most will be retained.

Motion: move to add Public Comment at this point. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom (name inaudible), Bethel: as an existing bus driver with 37 years of commercial driving experience, he did not support changing from First Student. If the bus depot is placed in Bridgeport, he and many others will resign. Most of the current driver pool live in Danbury/Bethel, and would not be willing to travel to Bridgeport. Mrs. Sullivan responded that it is the intent of Dattco to house the buses in Bethel, not Bridgeport.

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: he asked that the Boards strongly encourage the new company to rehire the existing bus drivers. He asked if liquefied natural gas was considered as an alternate fuel source. Mrs. Sullivan commented that when the food service vendor was changed, they interviewed existing employees and most of them were retained. She anticipates the same thing will happen with the new bus company. Dr. Cicchetti agreed with the importance of retaining drivers, but advised that Dattco should be allowed to follow the company's hiring protocol and standards since they will be accountable for the drivers.

Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept the recommendation of the Transportation Committee to authorize the Director of Finance and Dr. Cicchetti to enter into a 5-year contract with Dattco, Inc. to provide transportation services. Allan, Maiorano. Approved. 5-0-1. Dr. Underberger abstained (as he could not hear some of the conversation on his telephone connection).

Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education accept the recommendation of the Transportation Committee to authorize the Director of Finance and Dr. Cicchetti to enter into a 5-year contract with Dattco, Inc. to provide transportation services. Karvelis, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move that the Redding Board of Education accept the recommendation of the Transportation Committee to authorize the Director of Finance and Dr. Cicchetti to enter into a 5-year contract with Dattco, Inc. to provide transportation services. Barickman, Lewson. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion approved

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: Mr. D'Agostino commented on the importance of keeping the public informed on the Superintendent Search. He asked if the search was more local or nationwide, how was the search different from the previous search, and asked how extensive the expenses would be. Mr. Karvelis responded that the Committee is open to a search both inside the local area and outside. The expenses are primarily for job postings and professional journal listings (and would be modest). No focus groups are planned for the search (since the 2009 input is still fresh), but a public meeting is planned for March 14. The search is different from the previous primarily with regard to the interview process.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move to adjourn the Region 9 Board of Education meeting. Gombos, Shapiro. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to adjourn the Redding Board of Education meeting. Lewson, Miller. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion: move to adjourn the Easton Board of Education meeting. Dunsby, Bobroske. Approved. Unanimous.

Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Logie, Region 9 Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday