

Minutes approved March 15, 2011

JOINT MEETING OF
REGION #9 BOARD OF EDUCATION &
FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 2, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Region 9 Board of Education: Abrams, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Shapiro

Financial Advisory Committee: DeSalvo, Hanczor & Board of Education members Gombos, Karvelis, Hocker

Administration: Cicchetti, McPadden, McMorrان, Sullivan

Others: 19 members of the community, representative of the Redding Pilot/Easton Courier, and the videographer

Mr. Lewis called the Joint Meeting of the Board of Education and the Financial Advisory Committee to order at 7:09 pm in JBHS Media Center

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jennifer Wastrom, Redding: Mrs. Wastrom read her letter supporting curriculum development, professional development and restoration of those things that were reduced or eliminated in the current budget.

Holly McCreary, Redding: Mrs. McCreary supported the comments made by Mrs. Wastrom.

Jean Tompkins, Redding: Mrs. Tompkins offered her support for the budget and urged the board to inform the voters/taxpayers of the impact of the increase on their pocketbook in simple terms, i.e. what impact the increase would have on a \$500,000 house.

Alice Smith, Redding: Mrs. Smith supported the comments made by Mrs. Wastrom. She urged the board to fund curriculum development across the three districts and professional development.

DISCUSSION OF 2011-2012 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. McMorrان began the discussion with an introduction the school's leadership team: Walter Czudak, Mike Santangeli, Anne Kipp, Gina Pinn, Mary Ann Sheehy, Patty Roszko, Cheri Shutt, Paula Panos, Julie McTague, Maureen Kilbourn and John Crowley.

Mrs. Sullivan reported on technical edits to the proposed budget totaling \$41,600. The edits included a reduction in electricity costs, health insurance costs and a reduction in liability & property insurance.

Mr. McMorrان proposed the addition of an additional teacher in the science/math area. Mrs. McTague reviewed the need for the additional position based on current enrollment data.

Mr. McMorrان proposed a 0.2 FTE for ELL/ESL to assist students to master the English language. The addition would take a specific teacher from a 1.0 FTE to a 1.2 FTE. While there is grant money available for this, the amount received this year was \$146.

Mr. McMorrان noted that there is a need for an additional section of Physical Education specifically for students with special needs. The staff is working to find coverage within the budget for this additional section.

Four staff members have announced their retirement at the end of the school year.

Mr. McMorrان proposed continuation of the Literacy Consultant rather than restoration of the reading teacher position.

Funding was proposed to begin preparation for the NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) evaluation scheduled for the spring or fall of 2014

The proposed budget starting point was a 3.34% increase over the current budget. A worksheet was provided showing the reductions for technical edits, additions and other reductions, in six categories that took the budget from the 3.34% increase down to a 2.5% increase.

Discussion followed.

The Board of Education and FAC will meet again on Monday, March 7, 2011, to discuss the budget proposal further. Mr. Lewis asked to see what further reductions could be made to take the budget increase to 2.3%, and 2.4%. Mr. DeSalvo asked what the impact would be if the budget was voted down and the budget was drastically reduced to a 0 % increase. Dr. Shapiro asked what budget reductions would be made to bring the increase down to 2%. Mrs. Abrams agreed with the request for a 2% increase. Mr. Karvelis asked for a 2.3% or 2.4% increase, suggesting the funding the NEASC be deferred a year. Mrs. Gombos suggested a 2% increase. Mr. Logie noted that, given that the enrollment shift to Easton and the 2.5% increase translates to an increase for Easton of 4% and for Redding an increase of 1.13%. [For further reference, a 2.4% increase would increase Easton's share 3.91%, Redding's by 1.01%, a 2.3% increase would result in a 3.81% Easton increase, and a 0.94% Redding increase over spending for the current 2010/11 Region 9 budget.]

Dr. Cicchetti thanked the board and FAC for their questions and discussion. The plan for the Monday meeting will be preparation a budget with increases down to 2%, distribution of the enrollment documents to Board members on Friday, March 4, and impact statements for the proposed budget reductions. He thanked the administrative team for all the work they did on the budget preparation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Saul Cornell, Redding: Mr. Cornell endorsed the comments of Jen Wastrom, and commented on the need for professional development.

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: Mr. D'Agostino suggested the reading specialist position be restored, in addition to the literacy specialist; he added that while Easton may be faced with a larger percentage increase in budget, the board should be mindful of the students and what is best for them.

Jamie Barickman, Redding: Mr. Barickman commented that while one town pays the larger portion of the budget, the other town is faced with the larger portion of the increase, but this should not be the driving force behind what is included in the budget.

Jean Tompkins, Redding: Mrs. Thompson reiterated the need to quantify the impact of the budget on the taxpayer, and stressed the importance of urging taxpayers to pass both the town budget and the budget for the high school.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: move to adjourn the meeting. Shapiro, Karvelis Approved. Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Logie, Board Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday