

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION  
September 20, 2011  
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Abrams, Gombos, Hocker, Karvelis, Lewis, Logie, Macchio, Shapiro  
Administration: Josefsberg, McMorrان, Sullivan, Sheehy, Pin, Santangeli, Czudak  
Student Representative: Erin Meskers  
Others: 12 members of the community and staff, representatives of the Patch.com & Redding Pilot, and the videographer

Mr. Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in JBHS Media Center

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2011 special meeting as corrected. Shapiro, Hocker. Approved. 6-0-2. Mrs. Abrams and Mr. Macchio abstained**  
**Correction: Mr. Karvelis and Dr. Shapiro were present for the meeting.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2011 regular meeting as submitted. Karvelis, Gombos. Approved Unanimous.**

AGENDA ADDITION

**Motion: move to add Student Comment to the agenda. Gombos, Shapiro. Approved. Unanimous.**

STUDENT COMMENT

Student Council representative, Erin Meskers, reported on student activities. The fall play tryouts for The Wiz are underway. Ms. Meskers congratulated Dr. McMorrان on receiving his doctorate degree.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Suzanne Krivit, Redding: Ms. Krivit thanked the administration for opening the school to the community for water and showers when she and many in our community were without electricity due to hurricane Irene.

BOARD MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2012

The revised schedule of meetings for 2012 was reviewed. The November meeting was changed to November 27, the week following Thanksgiving. Mrs. Gombos asked that the usual Tri-board meeting in January be added to the schedule. The calendar will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

Board members discussed moving the November 22, 2011 meeting to the following week. A decision on this will be made at the next meeting. Mr. Logie asked if the Easton and Redding boards planned any joint meetings. Dr. Josefsberg responded that the June 2012 meeting will be a joint meeting of the two K-8 boards.

UPDATE ON COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Dr. McMorrان reviewed some of the college admissions data, including the Application Summary, Percentage of Applications with Acceptances for 2006-2011, the Average GPA and SAT of Applications with Acceptances, the Educational Profile for the classes of 2007-2011, and a list of colleges the class of 2011 will attend. Additional information will be presented at the October meeting.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR OUT OF COUNTRY FIELD TRIP TO FRANCE

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the Field Trip to France as presented. Logie Karvelis.**

Discussion followed.

Mrs. Van Ausdale presented details on a proposed trip to France during February break. The trip will also include the two school days prior to the February break. The joint venture with Fairfield Ludlowe High School is a French Cultural Exchange and students will spend part of the time with host families.

Mrs. Gombos asked if such trips abroad could be done without the school's sponsorship and school's insurance. She noted that should there be an incident of any type, the school's liability insurance, and cost to the taxpayers, would be impacted. Mrs. Van Ausdale responded that she had not researched trips outside of the school sponsorship and added that the tour with Prometour includes specific levels of insurance. Board members requested additional information on the insurance aspects of the trip.

**Motion withdrawn: Mr. Logie, with Mr. Karvelis' agreement, withdrew the original motion.**

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the Field Trip to France, pending further detail on insurance coverage. Logie, Karvelis. Approved. 7-1. Mrs. Gombos voted against the motion.**

#### DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF FORMATION OF GYMNASTICS TEAM

Director of Athletics, Mike Santangeli, submitted a proposal for the formation gymnastics team. A number of students and parents have expressed a desire to form the team and a willingness to fund the team for the foreseeable future. The team would collaborate with Weston High School utilizing their facilities and following their meet schedule so that the cost of transportation and officiating associated with the competitions could be split. Mr. Santangeli estimates the cost to the parents would be \$8,000. Mr. Santangeli added that the Weston Schools Board of Education has approved the proposal.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the formation of a Gymnastics Varsity Team with parent funding of the expenses. Gombos, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PILOT SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM: I-PAD CART

Dr. McMorrان proposed the allocation of funds to purchase 30 I-pads, each with covers, AppleCare protection and a cart, for a pilot program in the Humanities Program. The cost is \$19,909. Based on the positive experience of the use of I-pads in the Physics class, this would extend the experiment to the social studies classroom.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the request for the Pilot Social Studies Program as described. Gombos, Hocker.**

Discussion followed.

Board members discussed the need for a comprehensive plan for use of I-pads throughout the school. Mrs. Sullivan added that the 3-year Technology Plan must be updated this year and a comprehensive plan could be included. The funding of \$19,909 would come from salary savings. Mr. Logie was opposed to using the salary savings in this manner, due to the anticipation of higher than budgeted costs for heating and diesel fuel. Mrs. Sullivan added that the consortium has not as yet locked in prices for heating and diesel fuel, but the current projection has the cost coming in at an additional \$17,000 for heating oil and \$30,000 to 40,000 for diesel fuel. Currently she has earmarked savings in other accounts to cover the budget shortfall.

Mrs. Gombos requested an interim report on the use of I-pads in the Physics class and asked that the decision be deferred to the next meeting. Dr. Josefsberg suggested a report of use of the I-pads by the Science Department from an educational standpoint and he supports allowing teachers to experiment to see what can be accomplished with this technology.

**Motion withdrawn: Mrs. Gombos, with Mr. Hocker's agreement, withdrew the original motion.**

#### DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF NEASC COORDINATOR STIPEND

Dr. McMorrان proposed adding an additional 12 days to the NEASC Coordinator's work schedule. The Coordinator has a year-long plan to prepare the school for the accreditation visit in 2014. The cost of the additional days is \$6,000. This could be funded through salary savings.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the request for additional days for the NEASC Coordinator. Abrams, Hocker.**

Discussion followed.

Mr. Logie stated that he could not support the proposal to fund this proposal (at \$500/day) through savings at this time. He suggested a delay until December/January when fuel costs will be more definitive. Mr. Karvelis agreed with the delay due to uncertainty of fuel costs.

**Motion withdrawn: Mrs. Abrams, with Mr. Hocker's agreement, withdrew the motion.**

#### DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF BOND REFINANCE

Mrs. Sullivan reported that two debt offerings of approximately \$14,700,000 will be refinanced with a potential savings of \$618,000 over the 14 year period. The interest cost savings will be front loaded, with \$189,000 in year 1, and \$84,000 in year two. (Since this debt is related to capital improvements, saving from debt refinancing will be placed in the capital reserve account.)

**Motion: move that the Region 9 approve the following resolution:**

Resolved:

Section 1. Not exceeding \$15,000,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds (the "Refunding Bonds") of Regional School District No. 9, Connecticut (the "District") may be issued in one or more series and in such principal amounts as the District Chairman and District Treasurer shall determine to be in the best interests of the District for the purposes of achieving net present value savings and/or to moderate debt service payments. The Refunding Bonds are hereby authorized to refund all or any portion of any one or more series of the District's outstanding General Obligation Bonds (the Refunded Bonds"). The Refunding Bonds shall be issued and sold either in a negotiated underwriting or a competitive offering, and at such time or times as the District Chairman and District Treasurer shall determine to be most opportune for the District. If the Refunding Bonds are sold in a negotiated underwriting, the District Chairman and District Treasurer shall appoint the managing underwriter. Each series of Refunding Bonds shall mature in such amounts and on such date or dates as shall be determined by the District Chairman and District Treasurer provided that no Refunding Bonds shall mature later than the final maturity date of the last maturity of any Refunded Bonds being refunded by such series. The Refunding Bonds shall bear interest payable at such rate or rates as shall be determined by the District Chairman and District Treasurer. The Refunding Bonds shall be executed in the same name and on behalf of the District by the manual or facsimile signature of the District Chairman and District Treasurer, bear the District seal or a facsimile thereof, and be approved as to their legality by Robinson & Cole LLP, Bond Counsel. The Refunding Bonds shall be general obligations of the District and each of the Refunding Bonds shall recite that every requirement of law relating to its issue has been duly complied with, that such bond is within every debt and other limit prescribed by law, and that the full faith and credit of the District are pledged to the payment of the principal thereof and the interest thereon. The aggregate denominations, form, details and other particulars thereof, including the term of any rights of redemption and redemption prices, the designation of the certifying, paying, registrar and transfer agent, shall be subject to the approval of the District Chairman and District Treasurer. The net proceeds of the sale of the Refunding Bonds, after payment of underwriter's discount and other costs of issuance, shall be deposited in an irrevocable escrow account in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of, interest and redemption premium, if any, due on the Refunded Bonds to maturity or earlier redemption pursuant to the plan of refunding. The District Chairman and District Treasurer, are authorized to appoint an escrow agent and other professionals and to

execute and deliver any and all escrow, investment and related agreements necessary to provide for such payments on the Refunded Bonds and to provide for the transactions contemplated hereby. The District Chairman and District Treasurer, are authorized to prepare and distribute e preliminary and final Official Statements of the District for use in connection with the offering and sale of the Refunded Bonds, and they are hereby authorized to execute and deliver on behalf of the District a Bond Purchase Agreement, a Continuing Disclosure Agreement, a Tax Regulatory Agreement and such other documents necessary or desirable for the issuance of the Refunding Bonds and the payment of Refunded Bonds.

Section 2. This resolution shall be effective until June 30, 2012.

**Motion by Mr. Logie, seconded by Mr. Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Head of School: Dr. McMorran reported that in response to the hurricane that caused a delay in the opening of school, the senior class took it upon themselves to organize an orientation of the building for freshmen on the first day of school. Dr. McMorran attended a conference on Common Core Standards with Ms. McPadden and a team of teachers from ER9. Ms. McPadden will incorporate state and national standards into the design of future curriculum guides on the Atlas/Rubicon mapping software. The Tri-State Consortium follow-up consultation on the K-12 science program will take place in November. A 911 Remembrance Ceremony was held in the Main Lobby at Barlow on September 12.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction: Ms. McPadden was not present, but submitted a written report. Ms. McPadden will be a presenter at an international educational symposium in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in October. The ER9 Curriculum Alignment Steering Committee participated in a webinar facilitated by the Atlas/Rubicon consultant. Dr. Michael Hibbard facilitated a training session in June for social studies and science teachers, and will provide another in the fall for music, art, language arts and math teachers.

Director of Finance & Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported health insurance claims for July were higher than usual. The year-to-date financial report and the Transfer Report were reviewed. Regarding transportation, there are no problems on the Barlow runs, but the third run (serving the Easton & Redding schools) has been experiencing significant delays. DATTCO is working to correct the delays.

Superintendent: Dr. Josefsberg noted his visit to Samuel Staples Elementary School during a review of new Common Core Standards. He emphasized that these standards require teaching “complex text” to beginning readers so that they will focus on word meaning. He referenced a New York Times editorial focused on verbal test scores, his own review of related materials on the National Common Core Standards web site, and a recent article by Christopher Doyle on the challenge of instilling self-discipline and an appreciation for complex text among children increasingly conditioned by the immediacy of on-line texting, FaceBook visits, and other brief digital distractions. [While our K-5 schools must adjust to meet these new Common Core Standards, our middle schools and high school must prepare for changes mandated in the secondary school reform law passed in 2010, and to implemented in Connecticut by 2016. ]

#### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Karvelis summarized the Communications Committee meeting of September 19. While the Region 9 Board approved Finalsite as the website vendor, the Redding and Easton boards requested additional information and consideration of other vendors. Edline, Power IT and Finalsite will provide a demonstration of their products for parents and staff. Mrs. Cram will prepare a comparative analysis of the product and cost for presentation and review by the communications committee of the three boards of education.

The Communications Committee is continuing constituency outreach efforts. Drs. McMorran and Josefsberg met with the Ridgefield Realty Board to present a report on the school, programs and academic excellence. A similar report will be made at the Easton Senior Center. Dr. McMorran discussed plans for improving Barlow's outreach to parents with children in the Easton and Redding lower schools. The Committee asked the administration to review the Communications Plan developed last year to bring it up to date and make recommendations to the Committee at the October meeting. The Committee also discussed the merits of combining communications efforts among and between the three ER9 districts by expanding the Communications Committee to include representatives of the other districts, based on a recommendation by Dr. Josefsberg. Mr. Logie suggested the ER9 committees for curriculum, communications and technology might benefit from meeting together several times a year (October, January, and April) to discuss common issues. Dr. Josefsberg agreed that this was an opportunity to act on common concerns and the boards need to find a structure that will make this happen.

#### FACILITIES AND FIELDS

Mr. Hocker reported the report on the stadium bleachers and light posts from the structural engineer was received and reviewed. The report finds the bleacher deficient for meeting current code for loading capability. The administration responded to the report and made essential repairs/adjustments to meet the loading code. The cost of the work was approximately \$8,000 and funded by the Repair account. While this is a temporary fix, a permanent solution is needed. The light posts were found to be nearing the end of their useful lights, but there was no evidence of deterioration. The Committee recommended a review of the entire stadium facility before moving forward. Further information on bleacher replacement, light posts, fencing, etc. is needed, in addition to a cost benefit analysis. The Committee recommended an appropriation of up to \$10,000 to engage professional consultants to assess the facility, and suggested the funding come from the Capital Reserve Fund.

Before moving forward on this matter, the Capital Reserve Plan must include a line item for capital planning/studies for \$10,000.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education amend the Capital Reserve Plan to include a line item for capital planning/studies for \$10,000. Karvelis, Hocker. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education spend up to \$10,000 to provide for studies for both immediate and long-term capital requirements related to the football stadium facility, to be funded through the Capital Reserve Fund. Hocker, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

Mr. Logie added that the board will need to consider other repairs and improvements to the Barlow complex (to include the roof). The current Capital Reserve Fund, plus the money that will be saved from debt refinancing, should total at least \$430,000 by next summer. This will provide the board an opportunity to move forward in stages with needed upgrades to best meet the near-term and longer term needs of Region 9 students.

#### POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Macchio reported that the Committee will schedule a meeting to review new regulations on medication, and other policies in need of updating.

#### AGENDA CHANGE

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education adjust the agenda, moving item 10, Negotiations of Teacher Contract, to the next discussion item. Gombos, Karvelis. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Gombos reported the Certified Teacher 3-year contract (7/1/2012-6/30/2015) has been finalized and ratified by the Joel Barlow Education Association. The first year of the contract includes a 1% salary increase with no vertical step increase. The second and third years include a 1.6% salary increase along with step increases and adjustments for those teachers at the top of the step grid. In addition, cost savings will be realized during the

course of the contract through a new managed generic prescription drug program, incentives to increase the use of mail order prescriptions, and adjustments made to stipends. Overall, Mrs. Gombos reported that the new contract is a win/win, for our teachers, our students, and Easton and Redding taxpayers.

**Motion: move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the negotiated certified teacher contract with the JBEA, for 7/1/2012 – 6/30/2015, as recommended, and authorize the Chairman to sign the contract. Logie, Macchio. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike D'Agostino, Redding: Mr. D'Agostino asked for clarification of what the facility study would include. Mr. Hocker responded that the study will include the football stadium complex.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dr. Shapiro thanked the members of the Negotiations Committee and the JBEA for their work on the contract.

#### ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Logie, Board Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday