

Region 9 Board of Education  
April 25, 2006  
Meeting Minutes

*Filed subject to approval*

Attendance: Bonfanti, Coppinger, Gombos, Lewis, Pemberton, Poltrack, Shapiro, Stone  
Administration: Fossbender, Calabro, Haig, Craw, Mas, Sullivan  
Media: Redding Pilot  
Student Representative: Tim Lewis  
Others: 2 members of the public

Mrs. Pemberton called the April 25, 2006 meeting to order at 7:36 pm

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Dr. Shapiro prepared an analysis of the budget and the budget drivers, including past budgets. She suggested a board discussion of the information by board members would be helpful for projecting future budgets. This will be a discussion item for the next meeting.

Mr. Poltrack congratulated the boys' Lacrosse team for a victory over the Wilton High School team.

**STUDENT REPORT**

Tim Lewis reported on the recent Student Council convocation that included discussion groups on a wide array of topics centered on the academics. He also reported Student Council was planning activities for the upcoming Spring Weekend.

**AGENDA ADDITION**

**Motion: move to add to the agenda 1) approval of minutes, and 2) a report from the Pension Committee. Coppinger, Poltrack. Approved. Unanimous.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2006 meeting as amended. Coppinger, Lewis. Approved. Bonfanti abstained.**

**Amendment: page 1, the following paragraph should read as follows, changes in italics:**

**DISCUSSION ON MEDICAL RESERVE *TRUST FUND***

**Dr. Fossbender explained the long standing arrangement between the three boards of education regarding the *Medical Reserve Trust Fund*. The plan in place allows the boards to *make transfers within the fund* should the need arise. Dr. Fossbender recommended that the agreement be reviewed and re-affirmed, to prevent any misunderstanding among the parties in regard to the use of the Trust. The agreement would not be changed and the use would be consistent with the past use. He added that the Easton Board of Education will present a formal request to transfer funds from the Trust at the next meeting.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2006 meeting as amended. Coppinger, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Amendment: page 3, the following paragraphs should read as follows, changes in italics:**

**DISCUSSION OF MEDICAL RESERVE TRUST *FUND* AND REQUEST FROM EASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**The Medical Reserve Trust agreement with the three boards of education as originally established allowed member boards to *transfer funds within* the fund should the need arise. Dr. Fossbender recommended that the Region board review and re-affirm the trust agreement. The FOC reviewed the agreement at their meeting prior to this meeting, and recommended approval of the agreement with minor modifications. Those modifications were discussed and agreed to. Currently the Easton Board of Education has extraordinary medical claims and is experiencing a shortfall in their reserve fund of \$331,000. Mr. Allen, Chairman of the Easton Board of Education, was present with a request to *transfer* \$170,000 from the Region's reserve fund.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2006 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Poltrack. Approved. Bonfanti & Coppinger abstained.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2006 meeting as submitted. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved. Bonfanti & Lewis abstained.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing of April 3, 2006 as submitted. Gombos, Coppinger. Approved. Bonfanti abstained.**

**Motion: move to approve the minutes of the joint meeting with the Financial Oversight Committee on April 6, 2006 as submitted. Coppinger, Shapiro. Bonfanti, Gombos, & Stone abstained.**

### **THREE-YEAR TECHNOLOGY PLAN**

Mrs. Mas distributed draft copies of the Three-year Technology Plan. The Plan is currently being reviewed by CES. The Plan will formally be submitted to the Board of Education for approval at the May meeting. Board members were asked to submit questions regarding the draft to Mrs. Mas.

### **BOARD SUPPORT FOR POST PROM CUSTODIAL EXPENSE**

The Board of Education has traditionally covered the custodial expenses associated with the Barlow PTSA Post Prom Party. This is a board budgeted item.

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education, contingent upon receipt of request from the Barlow PTSA, agree to provide the custodial services associated with the PTSA sponsored Post Prom Party on June 9-10. Bonfanti, Coppinger. Approved. Unanimous.**

### **CALL FOR REFERENDUM**

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education send the proposed budget for 2006-2007 to referendum on May 2, 2006 at time and places specified by the Towns of Easton and Redding. Coppinger, Poltrack. Approved. Unanimous.**

### **AGENDA ADDITION**

**Motion: move to add to the agenda a discussion and possible action on the Building Project referendum. Gombos, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous.**

### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON BUILDING PROJECT REFERENDUM**

Dr. Fossbender provided copies of his letter to the State Elections Enforcement Commission, a response form William B. Smith of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, a calendar of available dates for potential forum, and flyer produced by the Town of Washington explaining an upcoming vote.

Board members and the administration discussed the concept of holding a public forum and the distribution of information.

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education will hold a public forum on the proposed Building Project referendum on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at 7:30 pm in the Joel Barlow auditorium. Coppinger, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous.**

### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Dr. Fossbender provided copies of a letter to the Superintendents of Schools from Commissioner of Education, Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, regarding the State Board of Education decision on Education Reference Groups. The decision was made on April 5, 2006 to eliminate the 1996 Education Reference Group designations and adopt a District Reference Group designation based upon the 2000 Census data, for purposes of reporting data other than student performance. Easton, Redding and Region 9 are in the Connecticut District Reference Group A, along with Darien, New Canaan, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport and Wilton.

### **HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Mr. Calabro highlighted his written report, specifically noting that Jared Dworken was selected as one of the thirty Governor's Scholars of Connecticut and the winners of the Weller Foundation awards. In addition, he noted that student Dan DeCamillo, working with the guidance of Lee Skalkos and her husband, created a mobile for the main lobby of the school. The work of art was installed with the assistance of Walter Czudak and his staff. Board members will have an opportunity to view the mobile following the meeting.

Mr. Calabro will bring the substance and alcohol abuse policy back to the board at the May meeting. The administration has made some changes and additions to the existing policy. Dr. Fossbender noted that additional policies will be on the May agenda for a first reading.

### **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

Mrs. Sullivan reported on the following:

1. Art rooms, use of glazes with lead content: new state guidelines prohibit the use of glazes with lead content in schools. A consultant has completed testing of the art rooms and the glazes used at Joel Barlow High School and the Easton & Redding schools. The art rooms at Barlow tested positive for lead in many locations. The test is for a very low level of lead content, one that is acceptable for children six years of age and under. The Redding Health Officer, Doug Hartline, was notified and included in the various meetings. A plan of abatement is in place, the lead areas will be cleaned and the areas will be retested. The administration has re-located those affected classes to alternate spaces and the teachers have created alternative lessons. The glazes used are acceptable under the federal guidelines, but not under the more restrictive state guidelines.

2. March and April, month to date reports were available, as well as the monthly Function report. Expenses are tracking as expected.

3. Health Insurance: as of the end of March, Mrs. Sullivan anticipates an end-of-year surplus in the health insurance reserve fund of approximately \$432,000.
4. Re-imburement from State on building project: Mrs. Sullivan reported that everything submitted to the State Department of Education is under review and she was notified that this would be completed soon. The Change Orders completion, submission and review has not yet been completed.
5. Certificate of Occupancy: the full C of O has not been received as yet. Mr. Poltrack reported that the final approvals are still pending from the Redding Zoning, Planning & Conservation Commissions and the Redding Fire Marshal. In addition, the final paperwork from van Zelm has not yet been received.

### **DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

Mrs. Mas reported she and Jonathan Budd are members of the Advisory Committee on Assessments. She also reported the World Language Curriculum Committee met at Joel Barlow High School to observe the language labs. Members also discussed the transition process from middle school to high school.

The Wellness Committee is in the process of finalizing the Wellness Policy. Mrs. Mas will circulate the draft of the policy. The policy will be presented at the May meeting for a first reading. The policy needs to be approved at the June meeting and in place for the beginning of school in the fall.

Mrs. Mas attended the Student Council convocation and complimented the students on their focused discussions of several topics. She also reported the student facilitators did a very good job.

### **FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

There was no report.

### **PENSION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Coppinger reported the Committee recommended that four members of the committee be trustees.

**Motion; move that the Region #9 Board of Education approve the recommendation from the Pension Committee to approve as trustees the following Pension Committee members: David Boczar, Paul Coppinger, Arthur Poltrack, and Jeanie Wendschuh. Coppinger, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Region #9 Board of Education agrees to defend, indemnify, save harmless, and protect the trustees for the Region #9 Non-Certified Employees Pension (hereinafter "trustees"), and their agents, officers, employees, family members or other such related persons or entities, from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs or costs of claims processing, investigation and litigation, if any, arising out of any claim, demand, suit or judgment by reason of alleged negligence or other act resulting in accidental bodily injury to or death of any person, accidental damage to or destruction of property, within or without the school district, financial loss or any other acts of any kind, including but not limited to infringement of any person's civil rights, resulting in any**

**injury that occurred prior to the date of this motion. Dated April 25, 2006. Coppinger, Poltrack. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### **INSURANCE COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Gombos reported the Insurance Committee is continuing the work of finding areas of savings.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeanie Wendschuh, Redding: statement of appreciation for the civil discussion and good decision making shown by board members. She thanked the board members for their service.

#### **RECESS**

The Chair called a recess to allow board members to view the new art mobile in the lobby of the building.

The meeting recessed at 9:37 pm

The meeting reconvened at 9:45 pm

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion: move to Executive Session for discussion of a request for a Leave of Absence, and of pending litigation: consideration of action to enforce or implement legal relief or right pertaining to the Joel Barlow Building project.**

**Invited to attend Executive Session – Fossbender, Calabro. Poltrack, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting recessed at 9:46 pm

#### **RECONVENE**

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 10:46 pm.

**Motion: To approve extended leave of absence for Diane Lavoie for the 2006-2007 school year. Shapiro, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: To adjourn Coppinger, Stone. Approved. Unanimous.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Huntley Stone  
Region 9 BOE Secretary  
Recorded by Mary Maday