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REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
March 17, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.
Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons
YouTube Region 9 Board of Education Meeting - 03/17/2026
Minutes

ATTENDANCE
Board members: Parkin, Stinson, Johnston, Bendish, Scaviola, O'Brien (Zoom), Pampel (Zoom), Oppenheim (Zoom)
Administration: McKinnon, Scrofani, D'Agostino, Almeida
Others: 1 member of the public, recording secretary, videographer

CALL TO ORDER
Parkin called the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA
Approval of Minutes from the February 24, 2026, Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting.
Parkin, 2 corrections under admin. reports: 1st was written that Dr. Almeida had contracted with 2 SAT prep services, but should have been written as "contacted". 2nd, toward the end of the meeting, it was written that Parkin mentioned the "alliance for equitable funding," which was incorrect. He was simply encouraging people to advocate and testify with respect to education funding. Approved with changes.

Approval of Minutes from the March 5, 2026, Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting.
Approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT: None

STUDENT REPORT
Allie Humphrey, student representative, reported on various topics via Zoom. Debate Team: Success with strong performances across multiple tournaments. Science & Academic Achievements: Students earned high honors at state science competitions. Arts & Music: Sophia Tian placed 2nd in the state Poetry Out Loud competition, 8 students selected for the All-State Music Festival, and the upcoming Tri-District Concert will feature ~300 musicians from multiple schools. Athletics Highlights: Indoor Track & Field had multiple top finishes at SWC Championships; girls' 4x400 relay placed 2nd at the New England Championship. Girls' Ice Hockey won the SCC Championship, was named the 2026 Team of the Year, and Coach of the Year. Girls' Basketball: Won SWC Sportsmanship Award for the second year in a row.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Stinson gave an update on the Curriculum Committee. They discussed textbooks, and the Counseling Survey will be deployed soon.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
Dr. Mario Almeida, Assistant Superintendent, Head of School, congratulated Andy Pohlen, Marcelle Morrisey, and the entire theater department for last weekend's successful production of Pippin. The department is growing, and attendance was strong at all 4 performances. Also, students from the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club returned from the State Competition today and performed exceptionally well, with over 40 schools and 400 participants. They earned top placements, including 1st in Data Analysis and 2nd in Financial Statement Analysis. Overall, their strong performances across multiple categories were a proud achievement, with some qualifying for Nationals in San Antonio this summer.

Dr. Jason McKinnon, Superintendent, congratulated all theater personnel involved with Pippin and said it was an incredible production. The new sound system was crystal clear during performances. Unfortunately, there was a significant technical issue with the lighting system days before opening night, which luckily was repaired hours before the first show. The lighting system will need to be updated as the auditorium upgrades continue. He also thanked Dr. Almeida and 20 students who met with him last week for a student panel discussion focused on 3 themes: physical environment, how the campus could be more welcoming, and school security/safety. The students provided good information and feedback, and he looks forward to future discussions on different topics, such as rigor. Parkin mentioned other future topics: technology, BYOD, cell phones, and how teachers interact digitally.

Sara Scrofani, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Operations & Technology, summarized the updated Budget Object Summary for 2025-26 Unexpended Budget at $797,680. Changes in SPED, grants, and healthcare, which were updated from $1M to $1.5M. Healthcare Report: Feb 2026 monthly claims totaled $222,088, leaving the Month End Bank Balance at $1,170,602 in the current cash account. Four months of claims remaining, projected cash will be ~$382K. R9 Retirement Plan is a closed plan with an effective date of July 1, 1974, closed to new employees. Total plan liabilities are $9,536,114, and our fiduciary net position is 111% of those liabilities, which is very solid. Finally, there was a recap of the healthcare cash balance and EOY transfers.

Mike D'Agostino, Director of Facilities & Operations, spoke about the Nest project being mostly complete and ready to open up for the Spring athletic season. A few extra items to complete the project:

Domestic Water	$5,737
Nest Memorial Benefactor Plaque	$9,000
JB Floor Emblem in Team Rooms	$1,836
Stainless Steel Table and 12 Shelving Units	$4,432
Exterior Dining Tables (5)	$6,500

Total additional costs	$27,505.98

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education to add new VIII A. for Discussion and Possible Action of Nest Supplemental Expenditures to the agenda. (Stinson/Bendish). Approved 8-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NEST SUPPLEMENTAL EXPENDITURES
Stinson likes the new items. Possible interactive TV or whiteboards pending discussion with the athletic department.
MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education to approve the Nest building enhancements as presented in the amount of 27,505.98 to be paid from the remaining contingency balance, which is funded through the municipal bonds. (Stinson/Oppenheim). Approved 8-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: FY27 OPERATING BUDGET
Currently at 3.57% increase from last year at ~$27M. McKinnon mentioned various items that could be cut to bring the budget under 2.9%, with an estimated $1.5M savings in the current-year budget. Board members recommended using current-year funds to purchase these items so they are not cut for next year.

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve a 2026-2027 operating budget in the total amount of $27,226,097, of which the Town of Easton will be responsible for $13,776,405 (-1.81 %) and the Town of Redding will be responsible for $13,449,692 (7.95%). This budget represents an overall increase of 2.78% over the current year. (Stinson/Scaviola) Approved 8-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: FY27 CAPITAL PLANNING
Summer projects such as bathroom renovations, upgrading classroom furniture, LLC furniture, and common/collaborative space furniture.

Library Hallway restrooms	$167,214
Lower Gym Balcony restrooms	$75,985
“E” Hallway restrooms	$99,483
Classroom Furniture (20)	$380,000
LLC renovation	$250,000
Collaboration Space	$100,000
Total	$1,072,683

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education move forward with renovating 3 restroom areas: Library Hallway, Lower Gym Balcony, and “E” Hallway restrooms for the amount not to exceed $350K to be paid for from the capital reserve. (Oppenheim/Stinson) 8-0 Approved.

Almeida mentioned that any rooms receiving new furniture should also be painted, new floors, etc.

Public Comment: None

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: BUILDING SECURITY AND REDDING POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (this item may be eligible for executive session)

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education recess into executive session for the purpose of discussing Building Security and a draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Redding Police Department and ask to invite the Superintendent of Schools, the Assistant Superintendent and Head of School, and the Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Operations & Technology to attend. (Parkin/Bendish) 8-0 Approved.

Enter executive session at 8:41 pm
Exit executive session at 9:42 pm

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize the chair to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the Region 9 Board of Education and the Redding Police Department with respect to the school resource officer. (Stinson/Bendish) 8-0 Approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT
Scaviola briefly updated everyone on a meeting with Washington DC delegates and the Reading Elementary School PTA that was hugely successful, and they were encouraged to apply for an advocacy award with grant money. Can give further details at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education's regular meeting be adjourned. (Stinson/Bendish). Approved 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Submitted by Todd Johnston, Secretary of Region 9 Board of Education
Recorded by Andy Pohlen