Filed subject to approval
RECEIVED May 7, 2026 @ 3:23 PM
Eliza Berkowitz, Redding Assistant Town Clerk
4 Pages

REGION 9 BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Joel Barlow High School - Library Learning Commons
On YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpOKinELAtzbYQcJ5NA3-hg
April 28, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.
Minutes

ATTENDANCE
Board members: Parkin, Stinson, Johnston, Bendish, O'Brien (arrived 7:06pm), Oppenheim, Pampel, Scaviola
Administration: McKinnon, Almeida, Scrofani, D'Agostino
Others: the videographer, Allie Humphrey, 1 member of public

CALL TO ORDER
C. Parkin called the Region 9 Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes from the March 17, 2026 Region 9 Board of Education Regular Meeting;
B. Approval of Minutes from the April 1, 2026 Region 9 Board of Education Annual Public District Hearing;
C. Approval of Minutes from the April 10, 2026 Region 9 Board of Education Special Meeting.

C. Parkin noted that within the minutes from the April 10, 2026 Special Meeting, it should read, *"J. Stinson called the Special Meeting to order."* With this one edit, and hearing no other comments, C. Parkin deemed all of the Minutes approved by unanimous consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT: C. Parkin wished Student Government Representative, Allie Murphy, a happy birthday.

STUDENT COMMENT
Joel Barlow High School Student Government Representative, Alexandra Humphrey, read from the prepared report *Noteworthy News*, highlights included: 15 Barlow students spent their April break traveling through Spain; the National Merit Scholarship Program announced that two Barlow students, Yu-Min Cho and Kosta Nani, have been named as finalists; Kenji Perretz and Chris Gagliardi were recognized by the CT Association of High School Arts Award for their artwork; the Red Cross had its second annual medical panel recently at Barlow; the Girls Basketball team received the Harold Swaffield Sportsmanship Award; and, the latest edition of the school newspaper, *The Talon Tribune*, is available on-line.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS
There are meetings for the Pension Committee and the Joint Operations Committee occurring this coming Thursday.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jason McKinnon, said that the administrative reports would be brief in light of the meeting's extended agenda. Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Joel Barlow Head of School, Dr. Mario Almeida, gave an update on the FBLA Club trip and competition to San Antonio, saying that seven students will be attending and that these students will give a presentation about the experience at a future BOE meeting; he thanked the BOE for their support and grant to the club. Dr. Almeida also said that AP work begins next week and that the JBHS Prom will be held at the Trumbull Marriott on May 15.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Finance, Operations & Technology, Sara Scrofani, reported that the current Budget Object Summary stands at approximately $520K in unexpended funds, with some obligations being tied to this figure. She said that she expects an amount of $1-1.5M for the year-end unexpended balance. S. Scrofani said that recent health insurance claims were a little higher than projected, but still within an accepted range. She said that she expects the health fund will have a year-end balance of approximately $400K.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: JBHS SOLAR PANELS
M. Bendish reported that she had received a survey of the solar panel plan and that there are two options: Netting PPA or Go/No-Go PPA. The difference being the Netting PPA option involves buying electricity at $.09 from what we produce, and the Go/No-Go PPA option involves selling electricity back at $.17, and that the first option is $100K more in costs. She said that she had spoken to another district that had built a solar panel canopy and this district reported that they had no problems with any part of the process, however, they indicated that the return on investment in electric utility cost savings was not as much as they had expected. The Board had a discussion that included: the project is a balance of 20+ years overall; the solar panels could be incorporated into classroom discussion & curriculum; project is a great environmental move; construction time; risks; details of the structure; and, optics/aesthetics of the solar panels. C. Parkin said that the committee had not yet made a decision on the project. M. Bendish said that questions about the project should be sent to her, and that she'd like the Board to decide upon the project at the May 19 meeting.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: RFP FOR FACILITIES STUDY
C. Parkin said that the Facilities & Operations Committee has recommended that the District create a RFP for a facilities study, and that Dr. McKinnon would speak further on this discussion and possible action item. Dr. McKinnon explained that the administration would like to create a RFP for an outside company to provide a thorough assessment of building, athletic fields and parking lots, and come back to the Board at the June 23 meeting with the submitted proposals. He said the assessment would prioritize the needs over the short, medium and long-term for a 10-year facility study, and that this assessment would, in no way, take away the F&O Committee's decision making power. Dr. McKinnon also said this assessment would be helpful to the District in making funding and bonding decisions in the future. The Board began a discussion on this topic that included: should we wait until next year for this; are other ER9 districts engaging in this type of assessment; where is the money coming from to pay for the assessment; and, this assessment is not one of the items in the "sandbox" of projects already discussed and considered for year-end funds.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize the Administration to send out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Facilities Study. (Stinson, Bendish). Approved. 7-1 (No - Johnston)

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: SUMMER PROJECTS

Dr. McKinnon said that M. D'Agostino would be sharing his worksheet on the decisions already made regarding summer projects and projects still under consideration. M. D'Agostino presented a chart of projects approved by the Board at the last meeting, the three sets of bathrooms, and possible other projects based on the projected $1-1.5M year-end unexpended funds balance. He explained the possible projects as: Phase I: Classroom Furniture & Collaborative Spaces at $400K; and Learning Commons Renovation at $250K. M. D'Agostino presented slides of the Phase I furniture project that showed the first areas of focus as: classrooms A101 to A108, B101 to B14, and collaboration areas. A discussion took place that included: the different furniture configurations and options; expense per classroom ($17,000); whether or not to include the Centers for the furniture rehab (Math Center and Academic Center will be included as the Writing Center was recently refurbished); how colleges & universities all have collaboration areas on their campuses; whether or not to also paint these classrooms; identifying collaboration center locations; no time to form a committee of staff members to choose furniture, but will show it to them and take limited feedback; and, the need to start this project now.

After a short discussion about the Learning Commons, it was decided that the renovation of this space will be a project of a much bigger scope that will require feedback from a stakeholder group. Dr. McKinnon said that the administration will start this process. Dr. Almeida added that other spaces such as the offices and the main entry should not be forgotten in the refurbishment process.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education authorize the Administration to spend funds, not to exceed $435,000, for the Furniture Refurbishment Project Phase I which includes classrooms in A wing and collaborative spaces, from the 2025-2026 Operating Budget unexpended funds (Stinson, Oppenheim). Approved. 8-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: NEST PROJECT

Director of Facilities & Operations, Mike D'Agostino, reported that there is currently $23,139 remaining in the NEST Fund account. He said the NEST building has been nominated for the EZIQC program's Harry Mellon Award for excellence in contracting. M. D'Agostino said that he would be able to provide a list of items needed for the building for the $24K, if the Board wanted such a list. He also said that the benefactor and memorial plaques are still being considered.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: AUDIT SERVICES 2026-2028

C. Parkin explained that the administration would like to continue with the same auditing firm; it is the same auditing firm with whom the Easton and Redding School Districts contract through the Towns.

Motion: Move that the Region 9 Board of Education approve the extension of the contract of CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) LLP in Connecticut for audit services for the period of Fiscal Year 2026 to 2028. (Oppenheim, O'Brien). Approved. 8-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

K. O'Brien thanked M. D'Agostino and the NEST Committee for all of their hard work on the project.

C. Oppenheim emphasized the value of SpEd funding as a parent with a child on an IEP who will be going to a top art school in the country, Rhode Island School of Design, in the fall. She stated that with the necessary support provided at JBHS, students can successfully graduate and pursue a university education.

C. Parkin noted that there are three upcoming meetings for Region 9: Annual District on May 4; Regular Meeting on May 19; and, the ER9 Joint BOEs Meeting on May 26.

ADJOURNMENT
A Motion for adjournment was made by K. O'Brien and seconded by J. Stinson. Hearing no objections, Parkin deemed the meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Submitted by Todd Johnston
Secretary, Region 9 Board of Education

Recorded by Sarah Ota