

SAN LEANDRO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAN LEANDRO, CALIFORNIA
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SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION - MINUTES

November 19, 2009

The Board of Education of the San Leandro Unified School District met in special session on November 19, 2009, in the San Leandro Unified School District Office Conference Room 1, 14735 Juniper Street, San Leandro, California.

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by President Mike Katz-Lacabe.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Hermy Almonte
Mrs. Lisa Hague
Ms. Morgan Mack-Rose
Ms. Carmen Sullivan
Mrs. Pauline Cutter, Clerk
Mrs. Diana Prola, Vice President
Mr. Mike Katz-Lacabe, President

DISTRICT STAFF PRESENT

Christine Lim, Superintendent

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments concerning items on the closed session agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:38 p.m., the Board went into Closed Session for Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation – significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(b).

The Board returned to open session at 6:01 p.m. President Katz-Lacabe noted that the Board had been in closed session where no action was taken.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

None

SPECIAL BOARD WORKSHOP

Molly McGee-Hewitt, consultant, facilitated a Board Development Workshop to establish Board goals and priorities for 2009-10.

Ms. McGee-Hewitt briefly recapped that the Board had been asked to review last year's goals and the District's Mission/Vision/Belief statement, commenting that some members had indicated to her that they might want to revisit and/or make changes. Ms. McGee-Hewitt reminded the Board that these statements were developed over a long period of time by a group of people on behalf of the District, (Trustee Cutter, who was part of that process, described it as very long and tedious) and unless the Board had some major issues, the statements should remain as is and that the Board should begin focusing on establishing their goals.

As a way of providing a foundation to the discussion, President Katz-Lacabe read the District's Mission and Beliefs statement, and strategies:

Mission

The mission of the San Leandro Unified School District is to educate students to achieve and demonstrate academic excellence and become confident, collaborative and competitive in a global society, by utilizing state-of-the-art technologies and innovative teaching strategies within a well-maintained, secure learning environment, in a region rich in heritage and diverse in culture, where we value our traditions while welcoming change.

Beliefs

We believe that:

- all people can learn
- every person has value
- diversity enriches and strengthens our lives
- people have the right to make their own decisions
- individuals are accountable and responsible for their behavior
- helping others helps ourselves
- individuals need to feel safe and secure within their community
- it takes a whole community to raise a child
- respect for self and others is essential
- self-esteem is essential for personal growth
- all individuals have the right to equal access to quality education

Strategies

1. Family and Community Involvement
2. Assessment
3. Communication
4. Facilities and Construction
5. Funding and Resources
6. Technology Infrastructure and Equipment
7. Staff Development
8. Curriculum

Following the reading, Ms. McGee-Hewitt commented that, as opposed to San Leandro Unified who refers to their goals as "Superintendent's Goals", other

Districts set general District goals whereby the Superintendent and Board each develop action steps and success indicators to support the goals.

Trustee Cutter noted that historically the District followed that format; however, for the past several years, the process changed and the Superintendent created the goals and brought them to the Board for approval.

In addition, Ms. McGee-Hewitt provided some guidelines and suggestions to keep in mind while developing their goals:

- Goal-based – set mutually by the board and superintendent in priority areas (not “board” goals, nor “superintendent’s goals)
- Collaborative (working together as a governance team, the board and superintendent should also agree on success indicators for each goal, not just for the current year, but with an eye to the future
- Boards use the Superintendent’s evaluation as an important leadership tool to focus and align all district efforts, and as an opportunity to reflect and talk about where the district is going, adding that “goal-based” evaluations are the strongest and more powerful”
- Consider developing a “DO, GO, GET” list (things you want to do; places you want to go; and things you want to get for the district) that includes those areas of interest that might not fit under a specific goal or success indicator, keeping in mind that the Board needs to trust that their superintendent and administration will hear you and act on them to the best of their ability
- “DO, GO, GET” lists provide a way for the Board to share information they hear in the community and keep district staff abreast of the Board’s direction
- Keep in mind as you develop goals, to not put a “face” to the goal; the goal is not about the person who will carry them out

Prior to reviewing the goals from last year, Trustee Prola felt that it would be more beneficial if the Board took time to brainstorm their thoughts first, at which time, Ms. McGee-Hewitt suggested that they use the following general goals categories that were discussed at the last session as a guideline to establishing the goals and priorities for the District, noting that some of their ideas may fall under the “DO, GO, GET” list rather than a district goal:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Board Governance | • Community Relations |
| • Student Achievement | • Safety |
| • Curriculum | • Collective Bargaining |
| • Measure B | • Equity |
| • Maintenance and Facilities | • Program Improvement |
| • Food Services | • Human Resources – Personnel |
| • Business Services | |

Board Governance:

- Strive to have a well-trained Board and would like to see the Board participate in at least two professional development modules a year

- CSBA or another provider can facilitate a Master and Governance Program for the Board; however it is critical that each member commits to this as a whole so that everyone hears the same information together
- Training needs to be customized to San Leandro Unified
- Commitment to interfacing with school sites
- Develop a master meeting calendar with the required two Board meetings a month as well as identify one or two potential meetings, so that last meeting notification and Board member unavailability will be kept to a minimum
- Teleconference into a meeting is also an option if a member cannot attend a meeting
- Protocols needs to be put in place for meeting notification
- Consider a “360 Degree Evaluation process” whereby the Board not only conducts a self-evaluation but the Superintendent and staff provide some input to increase their effectiveness
- Consider posting an online survey on the website, and making available back-room surveys at Board meetings, and staff satisfaction surveys which gives district staff and the community an opportunity to offer feedback and provide a baseline for the Board as they move forward
- Once protocols and direction for the future are established, it’s important that the management team understands the expectation of the Board
- Designate a specific day for additional meetings (i.e. Tuesdays between the regular Board meeting dates)

With regards to scheduling additional meetings, Ms. McGee-Hewitt felt that for a district the size of San Leandro two meetings plus an occasional workshop should be sufficient for the governance.

Ms. McGee-Hewitt stated that in some districts, boards have their own set of goals apart from the district-wide goals, adding that should this board decided to develop governance goals for themselves, the implementation and how to proceed rests with the Board and the committees.

A concern was then raised by the Board regarding the effectiveness of the Board committees, with Ms. McGee-Hewitt commenting that if the committee structure is really working then responsibility is delegated between trustees and the need for numerous meetings can be kept to the minimum. Unfortunately it was noted that with the exception of the Facilities/Technology Committee, most committees have not met on a regular basis, with Ms. McGee-Hewitt suggesting that maybe the Board consider placing the committees on hold.

Trustee Hague, however, disagreed, stating that committees provide a pre-screening on issues being brought to the Board which can provide more thorough and clearer information to the entire Board.

It was also noted that first-term Board members need to take the time to learn the process, protocols need to be in place, and experience shared by a veteran member can be very helpful.

Curriculum & Instruction

- Weave student achievement into all the goals, not just curriculum & instruction
- Set clearer standards for student performance and define what students need to know
- High quality instruction where all students are encouraged to achieve at a certain level so they can compete with their peers to further their education/career
- In light of Program Improvement (PI) status, focus on having continuity District-wide
- Reinvigorate a sense of collegiality from site to site - sites are not sharing process, best practices, etc.
- Offer some counseling enriched or alternate education for middle school level students not accepted at Lincoln
- Address PI designation as a priority
- Curriculum and student achievement should be the #1 goal
- Language should reflect the importance of bringing all students to proficiency instead of “getting out of PI”
- Site representatives attend district-wide curriculum meetings (i.e. Math, English) where best practices are shared and decisions regarding curriculum are discussed

Budget and Finance; Maintenance and Facilities

- Needs to be a top priority
- Alignment of resources and priorities
- Strive to keep District solvent
- Cost-cutting measures only when educationally prudent
- Capitalize and not lose sight of funding opportunities
- Safety should be included in this category
- Funding schools continues to keep schools safe for our students and it can make a difference in student achievement
- Communicating budget District-wide, invest in educating everyone, strive for transparency
- Enhance the general fund by exploring energy efficiencies such as “going green” to relieve the burden of the general fund i.e. paperless agendas
- Monitoring and planning ahead for new facilities but also keep the existing facilities in mind i.e. Burrell field and the high school swimming pool
- Revisit the Facilities Master Plan
- School maintenance
- Consider inviting union reps to school finance meetings presentations

- Since the District has not already made a decision to pursue a Parcel Tax, consider exploring and determining a course of action

Teacher Evaluations

- Overall goal under curriculum and instruction
- Too broad, needs to be more specific
- High degree of professionalism amongst all staff
- Make sure all teachers receive professional development or training in identified areas to help them be more effective
- Teacher evaluations is a human resource/personnel matter
- Staffing should reflect the demographics of students

Collective Bargaining

The Board briefly discussed negotiations, and the Sunshine process at which time, the Board provided the following verbal consensus:

The Superintendent will:

- Identify the Sunshine date
- Clarify a reference regarding negotiations made by San Leandro Teachers' Association President Jon Sherr during a recent conversation
- Sit down with legal counsel and staff regarding timeline
- Meet with Board and discuss and address issues on the table
- Set up a negotiation calendar based on "Article III of the Negotiations Procedures" of the SLTA Contract as read by President Katz-Lacabe:
 - A. *"On or about March 15 of the calendar year in which this agreement expires, the Association will present to the Board a proposed successor agreement or a letter of intent to negotiate a successor agreement."*
 - B. *"All initial proposals shall be presented by both parties at a meeting of the Board of Education as required by the Government Code."*

Food Services

- More focus on obesity which can also be tied into safety

Safety

- Crossing guards are under the City's leadership with input from the District
- Gang issues at all levels
- Disaster Preparedness
 - Sustainability and consistency is a problem
 - Nurses provide CPR training for Special Ed staff and coaches annually and campus supervisors every other year in early August
 - CPR training for EOC staff needed
 - Supply list for each school site
- Nurses provide health information to the sites once or twice a year addressing diabetes, asthma, H1N1, etc.

Staff Development – Human Resources

- Offer teachers in-service training hours which can be used towards units

Business Services

- Continue to refine the function of the BAC (Budget Advisory Committee)
- The Finance Committee will meet on December 1 and December 7. The BAC has been invited
- A tentative BAC meeting is scheduled for January 2010

Community Relations

- Increase access, transparency and availability of information
 - Use website that includes questions/answer regarding the roll of the Board, Superintendents, and staff, for example
 - Board handbook
 - Visit schools
 - Staff newsletter
- Naming of the 9th Grade Campus was a very effective and useful exercise
- The Communication Committee should develop a process that includes meeting with organizations, etc.

Trustee Sullivan shared her concern regarding how her participation in the Parent Equity committee (which she has been part of since its creation) might affect her role on the Board, because she was planning to continue working with the Parent Equity Group.

Ms. McGee-Hewitt explained that for the Board this “unwritten protocol” of gracefully removing themselves from a school site committee can be very hard and there is no right or wrong way; however, your first commitment is to the Board and one does not want to do anything that would compromise that. With that said, Trustee Almonte indicated that he would step-down as President of ELAC, as it could be seen as a conflict of interest.

Following the brainstorming discussion, Ms. McGee-Hewitt lead the Board in a review of Superintendent Lim’s 2008-09 goals.

For the most part, the Board felt that goals reflected that direction that they wanted to continue; however, were having difficulty in identifying success indicators.

- Goals #1: Develop model programs and providing quality instruction that increase the academic achievement of all students and work towards eliminating achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, and preparing students for post K-12 education and careers

- The Board liked how the goal encompassed a lot of areas but felt it might be difficult in measuring success indicators
- Goals #2: Develop, monitor, and expand effective systems that manage the District's financial resources, staff time, including the exploration of additional revenue sources
 - Ms. McGee-Hewitt noted that there maybe some language changes
 - With Goal #3 and #4, the Board discussed the idea of combining the two. Ms. McGee-Hewitt felt that it would make more sense to merge them.
- Goal #3: Promote and cultivate positive collaborative, professional relations and enhance communication with internal stakeholders
- Goal #4: Promote and cultivate positive collaborative, professional relations and enhance communication with external stakeholders
- Goal #5: Ensure safe, clean, and functional facilities that support optimal learning environments for all students and staff
 - Possible word modification
- Goal #6: Effectively manage and implement the Measure B Program, including providing timely status updates

Following the discussion, Ms. McGee-Hewitt proposed the following timeline and comments:

- The information and direction voiced by the Board will be synthesized and a first draft will be sent to the Board for review
- Once any further suggestions or comments are received from the Board, a revised document will be sent out, suggesting that if the Board preferred she would be happy to return for another special open session to assist the Board in prioritizing. Once the prioritizing is complete, the Superintendent will develop the success indicators
- Ms. McGee-Hewitt will create a separate document on Board Governance reiterating things that have already been discussed, incorporating the ideas shared, and including specific recommendations

- It would be beneficial for the Board to develop goals of their own on Governance Team effectiveness

In response to whether or not the Board would prefer to have Ms. McGee-Hewitt return to help finalize the goals, it was suggested that they decide once the draft has been received.

In response to Trustee Cutter, Ms. McGee-Hewitt's explained that in addition to Board president training, she helped write and develop most of Master of Governance curriculum, taught community relations, school finance, HR modules, and basic leadership training, adding that while she appreciated being asked about her experience, she felt that, because of her knowledge of the District, it would be more beneficial for the Board to have someone who would offer a different perspective as they move forward.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Board thanked Ms. McGee-Hewitt for coming and facilitating this process.

- Trustee Sullivan asked for, but did not receive, consensus to have the Board recognize Mark Montoya, Jefferson Elementary School PTA president and parent with a Certificate of Commendation for all of the work that he does including donating bicycles to raffle off for those student who participated in a recent fundraiser.

Trustee Cutter felt that recognition of school-site volunteers should be generated from the principal of each site, rather than the Board. The Board referred this back to Jefferson Principal Ruben Aurelio.

- Trustee Mack-Rose asked for and received consensus to recognize Energy Recovery, Inc., a small San Leandro company, for coming forward and offering to pay for nurses to administer the H1N1 vaccine to District students.
- Trustee Cutter commented that the Facilities and Technology Committee received all of the nominations for naming of the 9th Grade Campus. Trustee Cutter asked for and received consensus on the following selection-process:
 - Each Board member will receive a copy of the entire list of nominees, along with a matrix that includes the name of the nominee, Board policy criteria, and their merits.
 - At the December 1 meeting, the Board will discuss the names included in their Board packet, move forward any names they would consider naming the facility and discuss the merits of those names that have been moved forward.

- At the December 15 meeting, the Board will identify semi-finalists through a forced-ranking system, discuss the merits of those nominees and then narrow down their selection to the final choice through a forced ranking process.
- Trustee Katz-Lacabe commented that he attended the Arts and Crafts Festival at Monroe and had a wonderful time.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Trustee Cutter and seconded by Trustee Sullivan, the Board adjourned the meeting into closed session at 10:24 p.m. by a 7-0 vote.

The Board returned to open session at 10:55 p.m. President Katz-Lacabe said that the Board had been in closed session where there was no reportable action.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Cutter, Clerk