

SAN LEANDRO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAN LEANDRO, CALIFORNIA
www.sanleandro.k12.ca.us

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION - MINUTES

April 25, 2005

The Board of Education of the San Leandro Unified School District met in special session on April 25, 2005, in the San Leandro Unified School District Office Conference Room 1, 14735 Juniper Street, San Leandro, California.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Pauline Cutter.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Stephen Cassidy
Ms. Linda Perry
Mr. Ray Davis, Clerk
Mr. T.W. "Rick" Richards, Vice President
Mrs. Pauline Cutter, President

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Mrs. Lisa Hague

DISTRICT STAFF PRESENT

Christine Lim, Superintendent
Michael Martinez, Assistant Superintendent
Leon Glaster, Assistant Superintendent

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:07 p.m., the Board went into Closed Session regarding Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release/Resignation; Conference with Labor Negotiator; Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation – Significant Exposure to Litigation – 1 case; Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation – 2 cases, pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957, 54957.6, 54956.9(b), and 54956.9.

The Board returned to open session at 7:35 p.m. with the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag led by San Leandro High School Principal Amy Furtado. President Cutter noted that the Board had been in closed session and

- On a motion made by Mr. Heystek and seconded by Mr. Davis and by a 6-0 vote, Mrs. Hague was absent, the Board approved the following amendment to the Superintendent's contract:

“In anticipation of potential litigation regarding the enforceability of the Superintendent's contract, the contract has been amended with the approval of all parties. Specifically, the requirement of a two-thirds vote has been changed to a majority vote concerning a termination for cause. Additional procedural protections have been added and a termination without cause provision has also been included.”

President Cutter requested to move the Information Item up.

INFORMATION

Principal Amy Furtado updated the Board on the safety procedures that the high school implemented this year:

1. Assistant Principals developed a new radio protocol so codes and numbers are used to identify the administrator and incidents thus eliminating students overhearing incident reports on the radio
2. Frequent restroom checks
3. Addition of numerous cameras to the gym
4. Assigned zones at lunch, passing period, and during the school day for site administrators and campus supervisors;
5. Tardy sweeps
6. Thoroughness of Assistant Principals' incidents investigations
7. In-school suspension for minor incidents

In an effort to continue the success of their efforts, Ms. Furtado said future plans included:

1. A security booth (which will be manned at all times) in front of the school to reduce non-students from entering the campus and disrupting the school, and monitor car and foot traffic coming onto the campus
2. Placing fencing in the front of the campus
3. Adding additional security cameras facing the parking lot and “quad” area

Associate Principal Linda Granger recounted the incident that occurred on Friday, April 22 stating that generally activities are scheduled for students on Friday. While a band was playing, the students began throwing water bottles and the performance was immediately stopped. Following this, two students got into a fight. Campus security and administration immediately tried to break up the fight and disperse the crowd. She said that the challenge in this situation was to get the students back into class. As a result of the investigation, thirteen students were identified as being involved and were suspended. Later in the day, the fire alarm went off. Apparently some students had started a small fire in a garbage can of the second floor of the science wing. The teacher in that building put it out and students were evacuated. The County fire department came and

because the smoke could not be cleared for students to return to the class before the end of the school day, and it was decided to dismiss all students at 2:25 p.m. Ms. Granger felt that the school did a good job overall in this chaotic situation.

Following the incident, areas of concerns included radio communication, and confusion on where students should go during an evacuation. Ms. Furtado said that a fire drill would be scheduled to practice the procedures. Sadly, Ms. Furtado said that lunch activities on Friday will no longer be scheduled until further notice.

Ms. Furtado reminded the Board that only nineteen out of approximately 2500 students did not do the right thing and that it is really easy to focus on the bad things that happen at the site, but stressed that the atmosphere at the high school this year has been better than any of the previous years since she's been there due to the administrative staff and security, adding that staff would continue, in the upcoming weeks, to reassure the students that they are safe.

Mr. Heystek asked if there was a practice of fining students for such incidents, if the conflict resolution and the peer resource group were effective, and if Ms. Furtado felt that "overcrowding was conducive to what happened.

Ms. Furtado said that there were no fines for fighting, and found that it was very difficult for students' peers to be successful conflict mediators for fights. She felt that Friday's incident was not about overcrowding, and that no matter how many students there were, the end result might have been the same.

Ms. Perry spoke about the "rumor mill" and how things get exaggerated. She thought a follow-up letter to the editor with some facts would be appropriate to inform the community of what really happened. She has concerns on what steps would be taken to prevent non students from entering the school for the remainder of the school year.

Ms. Furtado indicated that there would be someone in front of the school at all times and at the next faculty meeting the discussion would include this incident and new protocols so that teachers would know what to do and have accurate information about their students.

Mr. Cassidy suggested speaking to Linda Sandsmark at the Daily Review as she is doing an article relating to the SRO issue and asked if additional campus supervisors would be needed. Ms. Furtado said that adding more adult bodies would not solve the problem; it was more about educating the students on appropriate behavior. Mr. Cassidy asked about procedures for suspended students refusing to go home and if the high school had ever practiced a "Columbine" type drill? Ms. Furtado said that in conjunction with the School Resource Officer, the school had a lock-down drill and one of the campus supervisors had been to training. Mr. Cassidy requested a plan on the fence idea and inquired about the policy regarding accumulated detentions and the rumor

that if students attended a 6-hour community forum, all of their detentions would be cleared. Ms. Furtado explained that in the past detentions “follow the students” resulting in them not caring if they were made up or not. She said that efforts will be made to try to get as many hours served by the end of the school year with everyone starting with a clean slate next year, and then if detentions are not served immediately, other consequences will be enforced.

Mrs. Cutter would like to invite San Leandro High School teacher Laura Hackel to a Board meeting to receive an accommodation for her quick thinking during the incident.

Board members commended the staff for the clear and concise way the school communicated the situation to the community and thanked them for setting them straight on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Claire McKean, President of CSEA and San Leandro High School staff member agreed that there was definitely a better feel at the high school due to the administrative team. She applauded Ms. Furtado for keeping everyone informed, and that the cameras have been a great addition, but felt that there was a need to install a fence around the campus.

DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the proposed timeline for a parcel election in March 2006 and bond measure in June 2006.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Jon Sherr, SLTA president, prefaced his comments by expressing his appreciation for Superintendent Lim’s cooperation in working with the association regarding the Governor’s education budget.

He addressed the Board in support of a parcel tax, and his concerns regarding the timetable, and the tax structure. He suggested that the District proceed with a parcel tax as early as possible (March 2006), leaving June or November open for a second attempt and then go for a bond in 2008 including looking at what other cities have done with regards to the tax structure because a straight parcel just doesn’t bring in enough revenue.

Ms. Lim said that at the request of the Board, staff prepared a proposed timeline for a parcel tax and bond measure, adding that the Alameda County Registrar’s Office would be contacting them regarding the actual costs for the parcel tax. She also said that she had a brochure from a consultant, Fern Tiger Associates,

who worked with Berkeley in a comprehensive community process on the student assignment program and reconfiguration.

Assistant Superintendent Leon Glaster reviewed the timeline for a March 14, 2006 (mail in ballots only) or April 11, 2006 Parcel Tax election adding that election date considerations included that the date must be on an established election date, or if not, it must be conducted solely by mail-in ballot.

Mr. Glaster said that Fern Tiger indicated that in order to have a successful parcel tax election a major marketing campaign and a political consultant to handle the polling would be needed. In her opinion the initial meeting should be a participation planning session, not a meeting where you make decisions, involving unions, PTA and business groups, Chamber of Commerce, City, District staff, parents, homeowners, and site councils. The next step would be to meet with smaller groups for the next two months; then start the major campaign in the fall.

Ms. Lim felt that the District needed a comprehensive concerted community engagement process and to look at not just a parcel/bond, but look at a parcel, bond, grade configuration, facilities, and programs adding that there would be a lot of work to do in educating the community.

Issues raised by Mr. Cassidy included a specific plan for the format of the May 23 meeting, "mail-in ballot" election, the creation of a Citizen Advisory Committee, Proposition 55 matching funds; and our ability to pay off current Certificates of Participation (COPs), absent of continued contributions each year from developer fees.

Mr. Heystek thought that the process, overcrowding, and the need of appropriate facilities were the issues and that a June 2006 Bond election was imperative but was open to doing a "mail-in" parcel tax.

Mr. Davis liked the Superintendent's idea of looking at the "big picture" in conjunction with a Citizen's Advisory Committee. He was inclined to support a parcel tax first, then a bond.

Mr. Richards' perspective included the need for both, but supported the March/April time frame for a parcel tax, having a backup plan if it doesn't pass, and then moving on with the bond.

Mrs. Cutter said that we needed to explore different ways of approaching this, and identify areas that would bring community support.

Mr. Cassidy and Mrs. Cutter would like Mr. Glaster to bring back information regarding the Proposition 55 matching fund issue to the next meeting.

Superintendent Lim said that staff would bring to the May 3 Board meeting a “global” picture on what needs to be done in terms of educating the community including a proposed format for the Special Community meeting on May 23 and an updated report from Superintendent Lim and Mr. Glaster following their meeting with a representative from Fern Tiger Associates.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Mr. Cassidy reported that he had received feedback from his article on the parcel tax concerning students outside our district attending our schools. It was suggested that Mr. Acuna, Director of Student Services, make a presentation to the Board regarding inter-district transfers, etc.
- Mr. Heystek really enjoyed the musical, “Bat Boy” at the high school and hoped that the parent community would receive recognition for all of their work/donations they did to make it a success. He also said that he hoped staff would be attending the Third Annual Job Faire.
- Mr. Davis asked about Mr. Cassidy’s request for follow-up on students from outside the District and thought it had already been addressed in the *Confidential Speaking (“CS”)*. Mr. Cassidy said that the information in the “CS” referred to “intra-district” transfers (transfers within the District).
- Mr. Richards requested that in light of the incident last Friday at the high school, notifying Board members by phone would be more effective than by email. Mr. Richards gave “kudos” to Jan Huls for preparing Garfield’s students’ for the STAR testing by bringing in “Star War” characters to the classrooms to sign autographs etc. and motivate the students for the STAR test.
- Mrs. Cutter reported receiving feedback from the San Leandro High School students who spoke on behalf of the teachers at the last Board meeting that the Board was very positive. She mentioned the Superintendent Forums of the past, where staff would attend and discuss issues in a not so formal setting stressing the importance of how communication helps staff’s perception of us. She was happy to hear that none of the senior activities were cancelled as a result of Friday’s incident and offered the Board’s help in anyway during these last few months of the year.

On a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Richards, the Board recessed to the closed session at 9:19 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 9:40 p.m. and on a motion made by Mr. Heystek and seconded by Mr. Davis, the Board accepted the resignation of John Muir Principal Vince Matthews on May 16 with a transition plan included by a 6-0 vote. Mrs. Hague was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Richards, the Board adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m. by a 6-0 vote. Mrs. Hague was absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond E. Davis III, Clerk