

**West Contra Costa Unified School District
Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting
Lovonya DeJean Middle School
3400 Macdonald Avenue
Richmond, CA 94805**

May 6, 2009

A. CLOSED SESSION

B. OPENING PROCEDURES

President Audrey Miles called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. The Board recessed into Closed Session. President Miles called the Public Session to order at 6:34 PM.

B.1 Pledge of Allegiance

President Miles led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

B.2 Welcome and Meeting Procedures

President Miles offered welcome and instructions to the public regarding the meeting.

B.3 Roll Call

Board Members Present: Madeline Kronenberg, Antonio Medrano, Audrey Miles, Charles Ramsey, Tony Thurmond

Staff Present: Andre Bell, Executive Director Business Services; Steve Collins, SELPA Director; Lisa Erwin, Senior Director Fiscal Services; Othilia Espinoza, Translator; Bill Fay, Associate Superintendent for Operations; Luis Freese, Director Maintenance and Operations; Sheri Gamba, Associate Superintendent for Business Services; Wendell Greer, Associate Superintendent K-Adult; Bruce Harter, Superintendent; Debbie Haynie, Executive Secretary; Linda Jackson, Executive Director; Harlan Kerr, Coordinator Educational Services; Barbara Mallon, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Joe Mayes, Maintenance Supervisor; Elmer Meredith, Electronics Technician; Nia Rashidchi, Assistant Superintendent Educational Services; Jessica Romeo, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Bill Savidge, District Engineering Officer; Janet Scott, Peres Principal.

B.4 Presentation of Student Board Representative Michael Payton, Vista Independent Study High School

Mr. Payton spoke about opportunities at Vista High School, his college plans and thanked his mother and others who have been influential in his high school years.

B.5 Report/Ratification of Closed Session

Superintendent Harter asked the Board to ratify the vote taken in Closed Session to expel seven (7) students and suspend those seven (7) expulsions for placement within the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

MOTION: Ms. Kronenberg moved approval to ratify the vote taken in Closed Session to expel seven (7) students and suspend those seven (7) expulsions for placement within the West Contra Costa Unified School District. Mr. Medrano seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano and President Miles voted yes, with Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Thurmond abstaining due to absence from Closed Session. Motion carried 3-0-2-0.

B.6 Agenda Review and Adoption

MOTION: Mr. Medrano moved to adopt the agenda with a correction to the title of G. 1 and the tabling of C.10. Ms. Kronenberg seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

B.7 Minutes: April 22, 2009

MOTION: Mr. Medrano moved to approve the Minutes of April 22, 2009. Ms. Kronenberg seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

- C.1 Grants/Awards/Agreements
- C.2 Acceptance of Donations
- C.3 Approval of Fund-Raising Activities
- C.4 Acceptance of Contracts for Placement of Student Teachers
- C.5 Notification of Claims Rejected
- C.6 Ratification and Approval of Engineering Services Contracts
This item was pulled for discussion and moved to follow Section E.
- C.7 Ratification and Approval of Negotiated Change Orders
- C.8 Coronado Elementary Portables Replacement Contract Award
- C.9 Dover Elementary New Campus Construction Project Award of Contract
This item was pulled for discussion and moved to follow Section E.
- C.10 Pinole Valley High School Windows Replacement Project Award of Contract
This item was tabled.
- C.11 Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Appointments
- C.12 Community Advisory Committee for Special Education Appointment to the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee
- C.13 Waiver of California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) for Two West Contra Costa Unified School District Special Education Students

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to approve the remainder of the Consent Calendar, except Items C.6 and C.9. Mr. Medrano seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

D. AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, AND REPORTS

D.1 Recognition of Richmond High School Student Blanca Zepeda

Richmond High Vice Principal Jose DeLeon introduced Ms. Blanca Zepeda who was selected by the Student Body to serve as Student Principal of the Day. Ms. Zepeda thanked those involved in the process for her recognition. She spoke about her scholastic interests, recent acceptance to UC Berkeley and her hopes that she can return to Richmond to help other students. Mr. Sammy Lee Hill addressed the Board and spoke of the support from community and civic officials.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment:

Ms. Kronenberg offered congratulations to Ms. Zepeda, her family and Richmond High School.
Mr. Ramsey said the District values Ms. Zepeda's contributions as a leader and wished her well at UC Berkeley.
Mr. Medrano thanked Ms. Zepeda for her work and commitment to social justice as she represents the District and Richmond High School.
Mr. Thurmond added his congratulations on Ms. Zepeda's accomplishments and acceptance to the university. He also acknowledged the leadership of Mr. Hill.
Mr. Payton said it is inspiring to acknowledge the accomplishments of fellow students.
Ms. Miles offered congratulations for a successful college career.

D.2 The Ed. Fund Excellence Award Winner Recognition

Ms. Rashidchi introduced Jennifer Henry, Executive Director of The Ed. Fund, who introduced the Educators of Excellence Award winners for this year. Ms. Henry said that The Ed. Fund has celebrated the accomplishments of teachers and community members for the last 21 years and each year are impressed and grateful for the candidates' work for students.

Distinguished Citizen Award Winner, Janelle Salazar,
Distinguished Non-Certificated Employee, Robert Turner
Excellence in Education Teacher Winners, Tiffany Carrico, David Flores, Farnaz Heydari, Linda O'Connor, Yasmin Reyes and Joyce Tanaka

Public Comment: Christina Slamon, Michael Wasilchin

Board Comment:

Mr. Thurmond offered congratulations to all the winners and acknowledged their service to students.
Ms. Kronenberg spoke about the purpose of The Ed. Fund in recognizing teachers and the other distinguished award winners particularly in this tough economic time.
Mr. Medrano also offered his compliments and commented on the selection process.
Mr. Ramsey congratulated the winners for their dedication, love, and passion for students of the District.
Mr. Payton offered congratulations and spoke about his recent scholarship from The Ed. Fund, expressing appreciation for its work.
Ms. Miles thanked The Ed. Fund for the appreciation of teachers and staff as well as funds raised to support classroom services.

D.3 Recognizing WCCUSD Teachers of the Year Don Wilson and David Flores

Ms. Rashidchi introduced two outstanding teachers who have been recognized by WCCUSD as 2009-2010 Teachers of the Year. Mr. Flores spoke about teaching and his own learning each day in the classroom. Mr. Wilson spoke about his colleagues who work very hard to do their best for students. Mr. Wilson is a finalist for the County Office of Education Teacher of the Year Program.

Public Comment: Tammy Campbell

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey congratulated the award winners for the difference they have made in the lives of people.
Mr. Medrano said these teachers deserve to be recognized for the caliber of teacher they are.
Ms. Kronenberg offered congratulations to the extraordinary teachers.
Mr. Thurmond said he concurred with the remarks made as these teachers typify the role that teachers play in the lives of students and families.
Mr. Payton offered congratulations and thanked them for their passion for teaching, also commenting about all classroom teachers who are unsung heroes in the District.
Ms. Miles offered her congratulations to Mr. Flores and Mr. Wilson.

D.4 ACSA Region VI and Valuing Diversity Award

Mr. Collins introduced the ACSA award winner Principal Janet Scott who has been selected as a state ACSA recipient of the Valuing Diversity Award. Ms. Scott said she appreciated the honor and takes pride in representing the District at the state level.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey said he is proud of Ms. Scott's hard work and the achievements that she has implemented at Peres Elementary.
Mr. Medrano spoke about visiting Peres Elementary School.
Ms. Kronenberg also spoke about visiting Peres and a conversation with the custodian who was proud of Principal Scott.
Mr. Thurmond said the recognition and innovation of talent in the District is well deserved.
Mr. Payton offered congratulations and thanked Ms. Scott for her service.
Ms. Miles spoke about principals who nurture teachers to be successful.

D.5 Budget Report Updates

Ms. Gamba reported on items related to the budget since the last Board meeting including revised projected state revenue updates, the May 19 state ballot initiatives, and the expected 2009-2010 revenue shortfall. Ms. Gamba acknowledged staff members who have come to the forefront to prepare data for review.

Public Comment: Tammy Campbell, Al Kirkman, Mike Wasilchin, Richard Leung, Marcus Mitchell

Board Comment: None

D.6 Standing Reports

Committee Reports:

Mr. Richard Leung, Public Employees Union Local One, spoke about classified employees' week and employee benefits.

Mr. Ramsey reported on the Ivy League Connection and a recent function with Brown University alumni and a potential mentoring program, as well as a DeAnza student recently accepted to Yale University.

Mr. Thurmond reported on an upcoming Safety Committee meeting May 13, 6:00 PM at Hercules Middle High School where safety of schools and community and summer opportunities will be topics for discussion.

E. PUBLIC AND COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

(Education Code 35145.5; Government Code 54950 et seq.)

E.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Harter provided a report of activities in the District.

E.2 WCCUSD Public Comment:

Mike Mahoney, Tammy Campbell, Leatha Ellie Ferreira, Mike Wasilchin, Robert Studdiford, Christina Slamon

CONSENT ITEMS CARRIED OVER FROM SECTION C:

C.6 Ratification and Approval of Engineering Services Contracts

Public Comment:

Sharon Farrell asked the Board to reconsider the Portola relocation at El Cerrito High School and consider the temporary lower pad on the existing campus.

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey spoke in support of bifurcation of this item for separate votes, as well as the cost of relocating Portola students, further cost information received after the initial decision, and shared campuses. Mr. Bill Fay responded about a truncated process that was followed by objections from the City of El Cerrito. Mr. Ramsey asked further questions about the contract process. Mr. Fay responded that the District did not go through an RFP process. Mr. Ramsey clarified the mechanics of the agreement and asked for further explanation of the expense, timeline, and educational impact. Superintendent Harter responded that the direction from the Board was to move expeditiously to relocate students with the earliest time to take up residency in the temporary facility during winter break. Mr. Ramsey addressed questions about impact of any lawsuit with the City. Mr. Fay spoke about timelines not committing to expectations for a Fall relocation, as well as potential legal challenges.

Ms. Miles asked what the District is currently doing to work with the City of El Cerrito. Mr. Fay responded that discussions continue to take place all along the process.

Mr. Thurmond spoke about the change in the scope of work due to changes in circumstances and that he agrees that aggressive strategies are necessary to work with the City and families in the community to create investment in the decisions. He asked that staff restate the circumstances that changed the scope of the project to requiring a full EIR and an update of the timeline of proposed project.

Mr. Savidge spoke about initial meetings with staff from the City of El Cerrito where they expressed a range of concerns regarding traffic, student safety, neighborhood impacts, and support of a full EIR and expanded traffic study. He spoke about a formal request from the City summarizing the requests which was used for the basis of expanding the scope of services with contractor PMC in order to work cooperatively with the City. The decision was approved by the Facilities Subcommittee to bring this item back to the Board as a full Environmental Impact Report.

Ms. Miles asked questions about the environmental impact study and whether it considers the value of educational programs. Mr. Savidge responded.

Ms. Kronenberg spoke about the initial approval to move students to expedite the project and the possibility to revisit the decision.

Ms. Miles commented about the value of the education and services available for students as well as additional costs.

Mr. Medrano said he is still concerned with the safety of students while other schools have dealt with similar situations of a shared campus.

Mr. Ramsey recalled similar temporary situations at other campuses.

Mr. Thurmond asked Mr. Savidge about an environmental impact report's overriding consideration and any options available. Mr. Savidge spoke about mitigation of an EIR and a possible legal challenge.

MOTION: Mr. Thurmond moved to separate the two items in this recommendation for individual votes. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the Ohlone Elementary School Reconstruction project with the firm Powell and Partners. Mr. Thurmond second. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

Mr. Thurmond asked for discussion to consider Board direction to seek an aggressive outreach effort to the City of El Cerrito along with an aggressive investment strategy to work with families and other stakeholders.

Superintendent Harter expressed concern at being asked to try to influence city councils. Mr. Thurmond spoke of this as a listening exercise to hear constituent concerns in order to develop solutions. Superintendent Harter further expressed concern for staff to implement this direction. Mr. Thurmond and Mr. Medrano said they would be willing to participate.

MOTION: Mr. Medrano moved to deny the contract with PMC for the Portola relocation project with an added provision that staff engage in constructive conversation with local cities. Mr. Ramsey seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, and President Miles voting yes, Student Representative Payton abstaining (advisory vote only) and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0 to deny the PMC contract.

C.9 Dover Elementary New Campus Construction Project Award of Contract

Public Comment:

Quinlan Tom, Mark Rice, and Bob Alten spoke about awarding of the contract.

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey commented about the bid opening process.

Ms. Miles commented about similar concerns from the past.

Mr. Thurmond asked that staff articulate reasons for the recommendation.

Mr. Fay spoke about documentation required with a bidding process and the resulting recommendation.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the Dover Elementary New Campus Construction Project Award of Contract to Alten Construction. Mr. Thurmond seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, and President Miles voting yes, Student Representative Payton abstaining (advisory vote only) and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

F. ACTION ITEMS

F.1 Resolution No. 85-0809: Classified School Employee Week, May 18-22, 2009

Superintendent Harter showed photographs of and spoke about classified employees throughout the district.

Public Comment: Mike Wasilchin, Marcus Mitchell

Board Comment:

Ms. Kronenberg, who teaches at the adult education school in Hayward, spoke about the “go to people” on her campus: site supervisor, custodian and office manager, who make it possible to deliver educational services. Mr. Medrano said he always makes it a point to stop and speak to office managers and secretaries at schools. He concluded by asking that a copy of the resolution be given to school sites for further recognition.

Mr. Ramsey echoed the appreciation and acknowledged the strong support of Local One employees at the various schools.

Mr. Thurmond acknowledged classified employees, and spoke about afterschool program work and relationships with custodians and secretaries.

Ms. Miles thanked classified employees as well as union representatives Mike Wasilchin and Marcus Mitchell.

MOTION: Mr. Medrano moved approval of Resolution No. 85-0809: Classified School Employee Week, May 18-22, 2009. Ms. Kronenberg seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

F.2 Resolution No. 86-0809: California “Day of the Teacher”

Superintendent Harter reported on a recent meeting with graduating seniors who spoke about teachers who have influenced their life.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment: None

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of Resolution No. 86-0809: California Day of the Teacher. Ms. Kronenberg seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

F.3 Resolution No. 87-0809: Declaration to Hire 30-Day Substitutes on CBEST Waivers

Ms. Romeo spoke about the state wide shortage of substitute teachers and that this waiver would allow the District to bring in substitute teachers that have a BA degree and one year to pass the CBEST Test. This waiver is required to be on file for the 2009-2010 school year.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment:

Ms. Kronenberg spoke about the difficulty of teacher lay offs and needing substitute teachers. Ms. Romeo responded.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of Resolution 87-0809: Declaration to Hire 30-Day Substitutes on CBEST Waivers. Mr. Medrano seconded. Ms. Kronenberg, Mr. Medrano, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Thurmond, Student Representative Payton (advisory vote only) and Ms. Miles voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

G. DISCUSSION ITEMS

G.1 Student Retention

Mr. Thurmond spoke about partnering with other entities to bring appropriate volunteers to work with students for a success plan for attendance and graduation progress. This proposal is intended to be a template for developing a priority to help students stay in school.

Mr. Ramsey said he is a product of mentoring because of his father’s success after dropping out of high school and serving in the military, and how mentoring has the potential of changing the lives of students.

Mr. Medrano said he is enthusiastic to pursue this program because a mentor urged him as a young student to master English as a second language.

Ms. Kronenberg said she is supportive of this project and interested in the details. She spoke of projects at El Cerrito High School, with Brown University alumni, and ways to develop a program. She cautioned about finding people

who will be committed and not lose interest as it leads to disappointment for the mentees. She suggested a steering committee, funding sources, ways of articulating with middle school through high school, protocols for choosing families, as well as looking at other school districts.

Ms. Miles agreed that this is an excellent start and that there are existing programs within the District that deal with the whole family and other community organizations are willing to partner with the District. She said with the state budget crisis, it is not clear what funding will be available, but would suggest looking at available services to establish partnerships.

Mr. Thurmond thanked Board members for brainstorming this idea to help students remain in school. He would like to bring this item back as an action item to provide direction. He would like to see an outcome or goal established in an effort to reduce the drop out rate by a determined percentage and bring together partners and existing entities.

Mr. Greer spoke about partners currently in place within the community and plans to look forward to developing a more comprehensive plan with multiple pathways.

G.2 Status Reports – Facilities Planning and Construction

Mr. Savidge provided a presentation on the status of the Bond Facilities program.

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey spoke about the expected approval by the State Board of Education regarding the District's debt limit waiver. He said he would like to learn more from staff about the predicted delay in the bidding of the DeAnza construction site. Mr. Savidge responded with clarification. Mr. Ramsey urged the Board to give direction to move projects forward. He also asked questions about Nystrom and the joint use project with the City of Richmond for the multipurpose building.

Mr. Medrano asked questions about how the Leadership Public Schools - Nystrom joint campus use is working out. Mr. Savidge responded that the situation appears to be working out very well.

Mr. Ramsey asked questions about the potential demolition of the Gompers site, saying he would like items agendaized to allow the Board to take action. Mr. Savidge responded that presentations are anticipated for a future meeting.

Ms. Miles asked for clarification of a comment about the freezing of bonds by California. Ms. Gamba clarified that the threat is at the state level, not with local bond issuances.

Ms. Kronenberg spoke about moving the timeline along and her support to bring construction items to the Board for action.

Mr. Thurmond said he concurred with Board members and that he would like to hear from Superintendent Harter about staff's requirements. Dr. Harter said that staff will await recommendations from the Facilities Subcommittee.

H. UNFINISHED REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD (continued from Item E)

None

I. COMMENTS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Payton thanked the Board for allowing him to attend this meeting as he looks forward to high school graduation. He said he appreciated the opportunity to serve as Student Representative and recognized his mother in the audience. Mr. Thurmond said he appreciated Mr. Payton's participation and congratulated him on his acceptance to San Francisco State University.

Ms. Kronenberg acknowledged Mr. Payton, his mother and other moms with the approach of Mother's Day. She also thanked the Hercules City Council for hosting a recent Ivy League Connection event.

Mr. Medrano spoke about attending a recent conference regarding undocumented students. He also spoke about the Cinco de Mayo parade, a Hispanic education conference, and other activities throughout the area.

Mr. Ramsey announced an Olinda PTA fundraiser at Chevy's.

Mr. Payton again expressed his appreciation for his mother.

Ms. Miles acknowledged the mothers in the audience wishing all a happy Mother's Day. She announced upcoming meetings for May 11 and May 20.

- J. THE NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**
Lovonya DeJean Middle School – Special Meeting, May 11, 2009
Lovonya DeJean Middle School – May 20, 2009

- K. ADJOURNMENT**
President Miles adjourned the meeting at 10:04 PM.

Motion vote count order: Yes-No-Abstain-Absent

BH:dh

AAM
Approved
5-20-09