

**West Contra Costa Unified School District
Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting
DeJean Middle School
Multipurpose Room
3400 Macdonald Ave.
Richmond, CA 94805**

December 2, 2013

B. OPENING PROCEDURES

President Kronenberg called the Public Session to order at 6:34 P.M.

B.1 Pledge of Allegiance

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

B.2 Welcome and Meeting Procedures

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

B.3 Roll Call

Board Members Present: Randall Enos, Todd Groves, Madeline Kronenberg, Elaine Merriweather, Charles Ramsey

Staff Present: Magdy Abdalla, Engineering Officer; Carol Butcher, Executive Director K-12; Steve Collins, SELPA Director; Bill Fay, Associate Superintendent for Operations; Sheri Gamba, Associate Superintendent for Business Services; Wendell Greer, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Schools; Rhonda Haney, Coordinator Disaster Preparedness / Safety; Superintendent Bruce Harter; Debbie Haynie, Executive Secretary; Joshua Herrera, Electronics Technician; Cecilia Mendoza, Executive Director K-12; Tashaka Merriweather, Coordinator School to Health; Mary Phillips, Chief Technology Officer; Nia Rashidchi, Assistant Superintendent Educational Services; Vince Rhea, Principal Gompers High School; Adam Taylor, Executive Director K-12; Marin Trujillo, Coordinator Community Coordinator; Ken Whittemore, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

B.4 Report/Ratification of Closed Session

None

B.5 Agenda Review and Adoption (Public Comment)

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the Agenda including moving item D.2 to follow B.5. Mr. Enos seconded. Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

D.2 Ratification of Staff Awarded Contract: El Cerrito High School Stadium Project

Mr. Fay asked the Board to ratify the staff award of contract for the El Cerrito Stadium Project. He said that all issues have been cleared. Mr. Abdalla addressed Mr. Ramsey's concerns about scheduling mark-up meetings and contract signing.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey said he was very excited about this long overdue project. He was excited that the El Cerrito football team has been playing at such high levels. Mr. Ramsey had questions for architect Kevin MacQuarrie of WLC Architects about the assignment of a senior project manager. Mr. MacQuarrie provided clarification.

Mr. Enos expressed wishes of good luck for El Cerrito Gaucho football team.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to ratify the Staff Awarded Contract: El Cerrito High School Stadium Project. Mr. Enos seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voting yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

C. AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, REPORTS

C.1 School Climate

Mr. Greer presented information regarding an overview of the School Climate including work with five community partners. He also highlighted four Board Policies to promote a positive school climate and provide for a school environment free from harassment and hate motivated behavior. Mr. Greer addressed suspension rates over the last three years noting areas of suspensions related to bullying and or harassment.

Mr. Tashaka Merriweather spoke about the programs and services in the Kennedy and El Cerrito families and focused on data for the types of programs and percentages of students reached where those services are directed.

Ms. Jenn Radar spoke of services provided through the James Morehouse Project Health Center at El Cerrito High School, including collaboration with teachers, partners and students. She spoke about embracing young people who are acting out due to challenges they face. She said the goal is not to exclude and separate them from school and classroom, but to see their actions as trauma behavior and work from that perspective.

Ms. Millie Burns of Catholic Charities of the East Bay spoke about the Restorative Justice program as staff is trained to shift the way they respond to human behavior that results in excluding and disengaging children. She remarked that trauma is often associated with poverty and violence.

Representative Alicia Rangel from the Kaiser Educational Theater program for middle and elementary schools spoke about engaging students through theater to make educated decisions regarding their health. This partnership with the District aligns their services with the goals and objectives of the Safety & Climate Schools Committee.

Student speakers from Kennedy High, Hercules High School and Youth Against Violence spoke about their experiences.

Briana Ruiz, representative for STAND! For Families Free of Violence, spoke about program offerings at schools.

Kate Gillooly with YMCA of the East Bay provided some history of the 28 year old program which provides counseling and mental health services in 15 schools

RYSE Center Community Director Kanwarpal Dhaliwal provided information about their programs for young people ages 14-21.

Mr. Greer concluded the report by recapping the 27 years of support by these various organizations. He also acknowledged staff members in the audience who work to support students.

Public Comment:

Doris Snodgrass, Karen Mason, Elana Bolds, Fayza Ayyad, Yolanda Stokes, Deshaz Harris, Devin Houston, Sarah Creeley, Karla Woods

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey thanked presenters and staff for their efforts in bringing these issues to light. He said he looked at District regulations that are outdated and asked staff to bring updated policies and regulations to the Board for review and action in January.

Mr. Enos said he agreed with re-evaluating the language put in front of administrators, putting an emphasis on making schools safer places for students.

Ms. Merriweather said she enjoyed the presentations so that the public can be aware of the programs. She spoke about the trauma issue and parent involvement in making students safe on campus.

Mr. Groves apologized to every student who was every singled out in school as a target of harassment. He apologized that the District has not been able to eradicate the injury that does not go away.

President Kronenberg remarked that the District has made great strides and is purposeful in responding to the social and emotional needs of students. Unidentified trauma continues to be a reason for failure to succeed. She said the District needs to make sure that adult staff members get support and the professional development training to work with students. She spoke of the District having six of the eight school based health centers in the entire county.

D. ACTION ITEMS

D.1 Approve the following new job description: Title IX Educational Equity Director

Superintendent Harter spoke about the ability for this position to coordinate services in high schools and at the District level to address issues. Mr. Greer spoke about coordination, along with training and outreach programs aligned to meet needs of student stakeholders.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Enos asked about the salary and the job description. Mr. Greer explained that the position is ranked as a Director with 30% of cost as benefits and a competitive salary.

Mr. Ramsey asked whether the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) had reviewed the job description for compliance. Mr. Greer affirmed that this has been vetted by OCR's legal staff. He added that this is one of the steps as part of the recent legal judgment.

Ms. Merriweather said she agreed that this position was needed and will validate the District.

Mr. Groves asked about other districts that have comparable positions and who currently handles the District's compliance issues. Mr. Whittemore responded that some of these duties are currently assigned to various positions within the Human Resources Department.

President Kronenberg asked whether the job description was drafted by the federal government. Mr. Greer replied that the job description had been developed with Human Resources looking at similar job descriptions from other entities and with OCR. He said it was written specifically to respond to the OCR judgment.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the to Title IX Educational Equity Director job description. Mr. Enos seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voting yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

D.2 Ratification of Staff Awarded Contract: El Cerrito High School Stadium Project

This item was moved to follow item B.5.

D.3 Approve the following Reclassification: Staff Secretary

Mr. Whittemore addressed the reclassification process with specific employees and their union as a result of increased responsibilities and duties.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

None

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to approve the job Reclassification: Staff Secretary. M. Enos seconded. Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voting yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

D.4 Job Reclassifications: Senior Administrative Secretary (Confidential), Senior Personnel assistant (Confidential), Executive Secretary to Superintendent (Confidential)

Mr. Whittemore summarized the reclassification process for the Confidential positions.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

None

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to approve Job Reclassifications: Senior Administrative Secretary (Confidential), Senior Personnel assistant (Confidential), Executive Secretary to Superintendent (Confidential). Mr. Enos seconded. Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voting yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

E. DISCUSSION ITEMS
None

E. COMMENTS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Ramsey spoke of the commitment of the Board and heart felt emotions shared during the meeting. He joined Mr. Groves in apologizing to those who have been bullied or harassed. He wanted the District to be honest about the problem in order to address and make things better.

Mr. Ramsey congratulated the El Cerrito Gaucho football team for their successful season.

Mr. Enos spoke about the community understanding positive outcomes for each student.

Ms. Merriweather said that the District is on the right track and moving forward doing everything possible to make children safe. She read a quote from Frederick Douglass about it being easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

Mr. Groves said he heard the intention and call of the District to lead to ensure students are physically and emotionally safe on campus.

President Kronenberg said that she learned that our educators need the tools to support emotionally wounded students.

President Kronenberg adjourned the meeting in honor of the El Cerrito Gaucho football team.

F. THE NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Lovonya DeJean Middle School – December 11, 2013

G. ADJOURNMENT
President Kronenberg adjourned the meeting at 9:09 PM.

BH:
Min sp 12-2-13

<u>TAG</u> Approved 1/8/2014
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