

WCCUSD School Board Meeting, October 21, 2015

To President Groves
Board Member Enos
Board Member Kronenburg
Board Member Block
Board Member Cuevas
Superintendent Harter
October 21, 2015
CBOC Chair's Report # 10_21_15

Presented by Ivette Ricco, CBOC Chair.

This report presents a brief overview of CBOC activities in our ongoing effort to perform the committee's duties as outlined in the Ed Code.

Dear President Groves, Honorable Trustees, Dr. Harter and Staff:

The Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee is comprised of dedicated volunteers representing the West Contra Costa Unified School *Community*. We currently have a total of 14 members.

At the August 26 CBOC meeting the committee approved its responses to the June 15, 2015 Grand Jury Report. We were happy to support the District and acknowledge the many positive changes that have taken place over the last two years.

As you are all aware, the Grand Jury Report recommended reducing the size of the committee, eliminating certain member categories and revising Board Policy. The Board's Governance Subcommittee has been tasked with reviewing and recommending possible changes to Board Policy regarding the CBOC size and composition.

At the September 30 Joint Meeting between the Board and the CBOC size and composition were again discussed. The final decision, which will be made by the Board, will have significant consequences for this body of volunteers. The CBOC will discuss the Governance Subcommittee's recommendation at the October 28 meeting and we hope to reach a consensus, as we are all anxious to move past this issue.

Although I was unable to attend the Joint Meeting of September 30, I have reviewed the minutes and spoken with several members of the CBOC regarding that meeting.

Joint meetings between the Board and the CBOC are a valuable opportunity to discuss issues face to face. Neither body does its work in a vacuum, and both bodies share the same goals, to provide the best education possible for the children in our district.

With all due respect to Trustee Block, I must disagree with a comment made on September 30.

The minutes reflect that Ms. Block stated that although she is pleased, overall, with the work of the CBOC, she feels the CBOC has failed in its role to monitor the impact of design efficiency and has not been aggressive enough.

The WCCSD CBOC has long functioned as a cheerleading section for the District.
That is no longer the case.

We have fought an uphill battle to reach this point, and in my opinion, we've come a long way, but we have miles to go.

It is the Board and the Superintendent's task to provide the CBOC with the tools, data and information it needs to properly oversee the Bond Program.
In the past, the tools provided were woefully inadequate.

It is the District, and only the District, that has had the power and authority to make decisions on school design and construction and it has been the District's construction philosophy to be "scope driven" and not budget driven.

I have been a member of the CBOC since 2010, and, it has only been over the last two years that we have received true support from the District. I thank you.

But, the District has, in the past, as the Grand Jury report states, Stymied, the efforts of the CBOC to do their work.
Whatever the perceived "failures" of the CBOC, they are really reflective of the past failures of the Board and the Superintendent, not of the CBOC.
We are happy to continue to move forward in a spirit of collaboration.

I have heard members of this Board express concern about the cost of supporting the CBOC's efforts.

Allocating resources for the CBOC is money well spent, especially if the end result is renewed trust in the District and the Bond Program.

Do not be penny wise and pound-foolish.

I ask this body to consider the impact your decisions make, on the CBOC, the only independent entity charged with overseeing this bond Program on behalf of the public.

It is my goal to complete my six years as a CBOC member, with two of those years as the Chair, knowing that the CBOC is functioning with integrity, independence and in the best interests of the community.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ivette Ricco
WCCUSD, CBOC, Chair