

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
November 30, 2018

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

December 3: Special Education CAC, Cameron, 7:00 PM
December 4: African American Site Advisory Team (AASAT), DeJean MS, 6:00 PM
December 5: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean MS, 6:00 PM
December 11: Solutions Team, Stege ES, 11:00 AM
December 11: DLCAP, Kennedy Library, 6:30 PM
December 11: Area Music Festivals, DeJean, 7:00 PM
December 12: Board of Education Study Session, DeJean, 6:00 PM
December 13: MDAC, Helms, 6:30 PM
December 14: MDAC, Kennedy, 9:00 AM
December 19: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 4:00 PM
December 21: Minimum Day for All Schools
December 24 – January 4: Winter Recess
January 7: Classes Reconvene
January 8: Solutions Team, DeJean MS, 11:00 AM
January 9: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean MS. 6:00 PM

Next Week's Board Meeting – Matthew Duffy

Closed Session for the December 5 meeting will begin at 5:00 PM.

Former Fairmead Park Update - Lisa LeBlanc

As reported in the November 21, 2018 Friday Memo, Fairmead Park was maintained by the City of Richmond up until the summer of 2018. The City no longer has the ability to maintain the property as a park and it has now been transitioned to the District. Since August, the City and the District have jointly removed 38 trees identified to be in poor health as well as removing a tree that fell into a neighbor's yard. The District has also initiated/completed the following maintenance items:

- Cut grass and brush on the fields at the site
- Cleaned up the debris around the site
- Contacted PG&E to trim trees and remove branches near power lines along the property. PG&E said the work would take place over the next 2 months

In addition, on November 28, 2018, Executive Director Julio Arroyo met with the Richmond Fire Chief and Fire Marshall to review the property for the purpose of including their recommendations in our upcoming scope of work, which includes:

- Remove approximately 3 additional trees identified in poor health within the coming week
- Reduce the brush and trees on the hillside of the park. We are in the process of receiving proposals to have this work completed by the Spring.
- Create a clearance along the District property border and the neighboring homes
- Communicating with the City Parks and Recreation Department to determine next steps for this property since it is no longer a City maintained park.

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El Cerrito Football Takes on Cardinal Newman Tonight - Marcus Walton

The El Cerrito High School football team travels to Santa Rosa tonight where it will play Cardinal Newman in the North Coast Section Division III semifinals. The game begins at 7 p.m. El Cerrito is ranked No. 4 and Cardinal Newman No. 1 in the division. El Cerrito defeated Miramonte on Saturday night 44-21. Because this is an away game, it is important that you contact Darrin Zaragoza at dzaragoza@wccusd.net if you would like a pass.

Media Items of Note - Marcus Walton

The following articles may be of interest.

Two ECHS Students Commit to Gambling - <https://richmondstandard.com/sports/2018/11/19/two-el-cerrito-baseball-players-commit-to-gambling-university/>

School Board Adopts Trustee Area Map - <https://richmondconfidential.org/2018/11/19/school-board-approves-trustee-area-map/>

Public Records Log – Marcus Walton

Included in this week's memo is the log of public records requests received by the district. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Public Records Request Log 2018 - 2019
Week Ending November 9, 2018

	Date of Receipt	Requestor	Requested Records/Information	Current Status
56	3/22/18	Scott Rafferty	Communications regarding CVRA allegations	3/26/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links 3/27/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links Gathering/Reviewing Documents
1819-04	8/1/2018	Scott Rafferty	Communications, social media regarding trustee elections	8/6/2018 - Acknowledgement letter sent Reviewing Documents
1819-08	8/30/2018	Nicole Bates – LSC	Referral, Suspension, Expulsion, Transfer, Arrest data	8/30/2018 – Acknowledgement email sent
1819-09	10/8/2018	David Stephan	a. Invoices re: Amethod b. Number of teachers under various credentials c. UCP Complaints against Linda Delgado d. Form 700s submitted by Linda Delgado e. Purchase of 1400 Marina Way South	11/28/2018 – PARTIAL FULFILLMENT Additional records anticipated no later than 12/14/2018
1819-11	7/16/2018	Denise Morgan - CCSA	Prop. 39 and space allocations for charter schools	11/27/2018 - COMPLETED
1819-12	7/19/2018	Denise Morgan - CCSA	Facility use agreements with charter schools	11/27/2018 - COMPLETED
1819-13	10/16/2018	Johanna Epperson – Dun&Bradstreet	List of all staff	10/31/2018 – Acknowledgement sent
1819-14	8/17/2018	Samantha Draper - NCCRC	Bids and contracts for portable building purchased since 2012	11/7/2018 - COMPLETED
1819-15	10/26/2018	Josh Yager - Anodos Advisors	TDS Solutions contract	11/15/2018 - COMPLETED
1819-16	11/09/2018	Meiying Wu – Richmond Confidential	TBE DLI test scores	More clarification needed
1819-17	11/20/2018	Matthew Dengel – CCC Public Defenders Office	Records regarding the release of student records to law enforcement	11/27/2018 – Acknowledgement letter sent

2 El Cerrito High baseball stars commit to Grambling State

November 19, 2018

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Two stars on El Cerrito High's baseball team have signed letters of intent to attend and play for Grambling State University, according to the [West Contra Costa Unified School District](#) (WCCUSD).

In front of family, friends, coaches and school staff on Wednesday, Nov. 14, outfielder [DeAngelo Fleetwood](#) and pitcher [Jamison Patanapanich](#) officially committed to the university in Grambling, Louisiana.

According to WCCUSD, "the senior duo helped the Gauchos to a 20-7 record last year, including a semifinals appearance in the North Coast Section Division II playoffs."

The 11th-seeded Gauchos would come up shy of winning the championship in a 5-4 loss to second-seed Maria Carrillo.

The Gauchos' baseball season starts Wednesday, Feb. 13 against host St. Patrick-St. Vincent.

Richmond Confidential



School board approves trustee-area map

Edward Booth on November 19, 2018

The West Contra Costa Unified School Board finally selected a trustee-area map on Wednesday night, moving closer to dividing the district into voting areas for future school board members and nearer to settling a lawsuit that alleges violations of a California law against discrimination in voting.

The board indicated a preference for what's called the Oct. B map, one of six possible maps of voting areas offered at the meeting. Board members Valerie Cuevas, Tom Panas and Mister Phillips voted in favor of the map, with Elizabeth Block and Madeline Kronenberg abstaining.

The final map will divide the district into five separate voting areas, each of which will elect one board member in future elections. This area-based system will replace the current at-large elections where school board winners are determined by a district-wide popular vote.

The next step for the board is to decide whether to take the map for approval to the Contra Costa County Commission on School District Organization, which is made up of the members of the Contra Costa Board of Education. Otherwise, the question of how to divide up the district could be resolved through the litigation process. The commission rejected a previous map proposal in July, citing possible gerrymandering, questioning whether the district had appropriately considered communities of interest and complaining about a lack of public involvement in the mapping process.

“It’s a power struggle, so let’s get real,” board president Cuevas said at the Wednesday night meeting, referring to how the mapping process has played out.

“All I care about is empowering local voters to get as close to picking who they want to represent them.”

The district was compelled to switch systems because it was sued in March over its at-large elections, which allegedly violated the California Voting Rights Act of 2001. That law made it easier for minority groups to prove vote dilution in at-large elections.

The district school board map approved Wednesday doesn’t fulfill the settlement requirement that one district be majority Latino and one be as close to majority black as possible.

Linda Ruiz-Lozito, the plaintiff in the case, a Richmond resident and active parent in the district schools, argued that even if she were to accept the map, the district could face further litigation if the Latino and black district conditions remain unfulfilled.

Her attorney, Scott Rafferty, said at the meeting that they were willing to make some compromises.

Two versions of a map submitted by Ruiz-Lozito were included in the selection process. Her maps focused on fulfilling the settlement conditions and created one district with about a 50 percent Latino population in San Pablo and another with a roughly 45 percent African-American population in Richmond.

These percentages were determined by the number of eligible voters. The district populations are based upon the 2010 census, and the maps will have to be redrawn in 2021, after the 2020 census.

Marcus Walton, the district communications director, said at the meeting that no independent study has been conducted to determine if voting discrimination exists in the district.

Proponents of trustee-area elections argue that they will provide stronger minority representation. Trustee-areas can potentially also diminish special interest group influence over elections. A grass-roots campaign may be more possible when a candidate only needs funding to run in one smaller geographical area, as opposed to covering the entire district.

Opponents argue that redistricting may have little to no impact on representation. Some see the flurry of similar lawsuits as indicative of lawyers looking to cash in. Losing school districts can be required to pay the legal fees of the plaintiff—as is the case here.

The Nov. 6 election, although it was at-large, resulted in the election of three Latina members—Stephanie Hernández-Jarvis, Valerie Cuevas, and Consuelo Lara.

Early in the year, Rafferty, the plaintiff's attorney, had noted that three of the five members of the board were white representatives from El Cerrito, which, according to the letter, represents less than 10 percent of the district.

But two of those members, Block and Kronenberg, lost in the most recent election, and Wednesday was their final meeting.

Board member Tom Panas and the plaintiff Ruiz-Lozito both argued that the recent election results don't negate the need for redistricting.

A condition of the settlement will place the newly elected board members into two-year terms instead of the usual four years. This condition was established so that district elections can occur for all five seats during the 2020 election, and no at-large elected members will remain on the board.

Though the lawsuit was settled for the most part during a September board meeting, the selection of a trustee map to divide up the voting areas has taken more time. Eight public meetings have been held in an effort to reach agreement on a map.

The recent three October meetings drew as many as 55 attendees.

Board members and the public were split at Wednesday's meeting over how to proceed. Rafferty, the plaintiff's attorney, argued for the necessity of the map achieving as closely as possible the Latino and African American districts, suggesting the case would land back in court unless the racial issues were addressed.

"I don't think you want to do this again, in two years. You really don't," Rafferty, the plaintiff's attorney, said at the meeting. "It takes time away from what you should be doing to help kids."

Richmond resident Don Gosney complained that the public mappings meetings were called with minimum public notice. He noted that at one meeting, members of the public spent 45 minutes complaining about a lack of outreach.

“When I look at these maps, I see chaos,” Gosney said.

Gosney noted that the three map planning meetings were held in centrally located areas—Riverside Elementary School, Stege Elementary School and The Latina Center—resulting in a lack of participation from other district communities.

Gosney also complained about the lack of overlap in the trustee-area maps with school attendance areas. The current maps under consideration allow board members to represent areas with different demographics from their school zones.

He urged the board to slow down.

“Nothing can go into effect until the next election, yet the board and staff seem so anxious to recklessly rush to a decision,” Gosney said.

Board members Kronenberg and Block favored leaving the map selection to the incoming board.

But district school Superintendent Matthew Duffy and board member Panas argued that the pressures of the situation were more financial than legal.

Panas made the motion to accept the Oct. B map because substantial time and money had already been spent on the lawsuit that he believed would be better used to support students.

“We’re in the middle of a lawsuit, and even worse, we’re paying the lawyers on both sides of the case,” Panas said.

“I think we should stop investing staff time in this case and start investing staff time in supporting our students.”