

**SANTEE SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

March 9, 2004
MINUTES

Douglas E. Giles
Educational Resource Center
9619 Cuyamaca Street
Santee, California

A. OPENING PROCEDURES

1. Call to Order and Welcome

President El-Hajj called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Members present:

Dianne El-Hajj, President
Cathy Abel, Vice President
Dustin Burns, Clerk
Julie McIntosh, Member
Barbara Ryan, Member

Staff present:

Dr. Lisbeth Johnson, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board
Carolyn Harness, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Dr. Patrick Shaw, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
John Tofflemire, Director, Human Resources
Linda Vail, Recording Secretary

2. President El-Hajj invited Jenna Keeler, a first grade student from Sycamore Canyon, to lead the members, staff and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

Motion:	Burns
Second:	Abel
Vote:	5 - 0

B. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

President El-Hajj invited members of the audience to address the Board about any item not on the agenda.

Ellen Holaway, of Citizens for Safe Power, requested that the District take precautionary measures to notify Hill Creek School parents and staff of potential health risks from EMF she felt existed.

Gregg Gunther, of Citizens for Safe Power, is upset that the District has not provided notification to Hill Creek parents and staff about EMF levels at Hill Creek School. Mr. Gunther stated that if cost was an issue he was prepared to cover the expenses to provide parents the information if necessary.

President El-Hajj asked Mr. Gunther if he had seen the report from the District study on the EMF readings. Mr. Gunther stated that he believed that the study was conducted on a day not concurrent with the court order and that SDG&E was aware of when the study was going to be done and decreased the power in the lines on that day.

Member McIntosh asked Mr. Gunther to help the Board to understand what he would like the Board to do about this issue. Mr. Gunther responded he would like the Board to disclose the information in a fair and

balanced method that the north side of the playground is a potential health risk in his estimation. He feels that the parents should be informed.

Allwyn Gazi, STA president, asked the Board to show equity in offering golden handshakes and a retirement package to senior teachers during this time of budget cuts, to honor senior teachers and to allow room for newer teachers to acquire jobs in Santee.

Lorinda Root, a parent of two children at Sycamore Canyon asked the Board to consider the children that attend Sycamore Canyon as they make a decision about whether or not to close the school.

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Johnson provided an introduction to the items that would be discussed during the meeting.

D. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

1.1. Discussion of 2004-05 Budget Draft

Carolyn Harness presented information on the budget draft with a projection of losing about 100 additional students next year. The second interim report will come to the Board at the March 16, 2004 meeting. The draft does not include categorical programs. Because the Governor's budget has not been finalized, the County Office is not recommending that the proposed 1.84% COLA not be included in the revenue limit at this time. The result is an estimated shortfall of 3.9 million dollars before any reductions are made. The Board is required to adopt a balanced budget by July 31, 2004 to be submitted to the County Office of Education and to the California Department of Education. Between now and June 15, 2004 we will be looking at ways to reduce expenditures and increase revenues to balance the shortfall. No action was taken at this time.

Superintendent Johnson reported that three separate groups have been looking at the budget and will be making recommendations: District Budget Committee, Advisory Committee on Instruction, and the MAT team.

All managers and staff have made great efforts to freeze budget expenditures except when necessary. Superintendent Johnson will be reminding staff to continue to hold expenditures only to those items necessary to operate their programs.

1.2. Committee Reports and Recommendations

Carolyn Harness, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, reported the following: The Budget Advisory Committee has been meeting monthly since October. A spreadsheet was developed for the committee with expenses divided into categories and departments. The committee spent a great deal of time looking over all of the different components of the budget. The Budget committee also reviewed the list prepared last year for budget reductions, which was more of an itemized list of programs. Both drafts were submitted for review. List number one provides fifteen top priorities for a total of about \$385,000, far short of the budget reduction goal for 2004-05. The second report presents the information divided into program areas and identified the top fifteen individual items within the programs that members felt could be reduced totaling \$790,000 in reductions. The Budget Advisory Committee will meet again when there is more information provided from the state regarding budget and as the Board begins to work through the process to balance the budget for 2004-2005.

Dr. Patrick Shaw thanked the members of the Advisory Council for Instruction (ACI) committee. Members of ACI looked at programs through the lens of curriculum and instruction and the potential impact of reductions on programs. The committee gave serious discussion and

consideration to recommended reductions. The preliminary draft averaged the amount recommended for reduction in each program area. Each member had an opportunity to consider each program and the amount of reductions that could be made. The second draft reported on more specific areas of programs that could be considered and the prioritization average of the members. If all recommendations in this report were accepted it would save the District approximately \$2 million.

1.3. Report on Transportation Fee Study

Carolyn Harness reported that based on the Board's action last year to impose a transportation fee for 2004-2005 and subsequent school years, a fee study was implemented. Only 86 of the regular education students we currently transport would be eligible to pay for transportation based on the criteria of not charging students on free or reduced lunch. Using these figures for an example, at \$1 per day, \$15,000 would be generated for the District. If eligible Sycamore Canyon students participated next year the gross would be about \$48,000. Out of that income would come any costs to collect the money, including an estimate of \$18,000 in clerical time. Projected encroachment on the general fund for transportation for 2004-2005 is \$413,000 and \$80,000 for special education.

Member Ryan asked if the Sycamore Canyon 7th & 8th graders being bussed to Carlton Hills were included in the regular education students. Carolyn Harness said that they were not but noted that they were to be included in the regular education count. President El-Hajj asked if there would be an increased cost for additional drivers if the District were to transport more children. Carolyn Harness said that the study was just looking at the fees if the District charged for transportation.

The Board will look at transportation during the budget workshop meeting on March 31. This item will be brought back to the second Board meeting in April for a decision. The Board determined last year that the District would begin charging for transportation in 2004-2005 and had requested a study of what other districts were charging to help determine what the fees would be. Member Ryan mentioned that the Board may want to also consider the option of discontinuing transportation of regular education.

Member Burns requested the minutes from the meeting last year when a decision was made to charge for transportation. President El-Hajj would like to have the information on savings for the District if transportation for regular education students was discontinued or if we continued and charged a fee.

1.4. Report on Facilities Usage Fee Study

Carolyn Harness worked with neighboring districts for rates charged. A chart was provided showing the different rates from other school districts and from the City of Santee, and included the rates that Santee School District charges. A list of facility usage and the amount of money collected for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 was provided. The chart included recommendations for suggested increases in rates for use of facilities.

President El-Hajj asked if there is a way to track total revenue. Carolyn Harness said that it is trackable.

Member Ryan mentioned that currently not too many groups pay for District use, most are non-profit. Carolyn shared that previously two churches and the City of Santee used the school but these organizations no longer use our facilities.

Member Burns was satisfied with the recommendations for increasing fees and was glad to see that we were not charging for use by non-profit organizations that provided services to children. Member Burns moved to accept and implement the recommendations made by the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services.

Facility	Fee
Classrooms (Small room)	\$65.25 for three hour minimum \$21.75 each additional hour Holiday rates: \$90.00 for three hour minimum \$30.00 each additional hour
Media Center	\$156 for three hour minimum \$45.00 each additional hour High activity use: Additional \$50.00
Parking Lot	\$75.00 per day
Outside Area	\$20.00 per hour (two hour minimum)
Fields	\$20.00 per hour (two hour minimum).
Deposit	Non with first usage. If damages occur during usage, group would be charged a \$250 deposit before additional use could continue.
HVAC Fee	\$35.00 per day (in addition to room fees) if non-school hours.
Equipment Fee	No charge for Tables or Chairs \$15.00 for AV or PE equipment
Custodial Fee	\$30.25 per hour (minimum of two hours if non-school hours).
Utility Fee for Outdoors	\$10.00 per day Additional fees may be assessed if excessive use.
Insurance Requirements	\$1 million coverage Additional statement
Fees are not assessed to non-profit organization benefiting children.	

Member Ryan looked at who actually was using the facilities and mentioned that not too many groups pay for District usage because most are non-profit, generating only approximately \$2,000 of increased income.

Although non-profit, "club" sports groups were charged for large tournaments where participants were charged. Member McIntosh would like to know why the "club" sports groups paid the Sports Council to use District fields. Business will look into this.

Motion: Burns
Second: Abel
Vote: 5 - 0

1.5. Adoption of Resolution for Reduction or Elimination of Certain Certificated Services

John Tofflemire presented a recommendation that due to anticipated non-sufficient revenue, Resolution #0304-24 including Exhibits A & B were submitted to the Board for adoption. Certificated employees that are being laid off must be notified by March 15, 2004 that they may be terminated and the grounds of the District's decision. The District's intent is to recommend reducing by forty-five full time equivalent (FTE) certificated positions. The number of employees who are actually laid off at the end of the school year may vary due to employees requesting leave

of absence, retiring, or resigning their positions. The action tonight is not to reduce the positions but to implement the reduction procedure in case these positions are eliminated at a later date.

President El-Hajj invited the audience members who filled out speaker cards on this item to speak.

Eileen Cornish, president of Hill Creek PTA and volunteer for Rolling Readers, spoke on behalf of reading specialists and their importance to students who are unable to read or are struggling readers. She indicated that she was aware of the budget crisis.

Elana Levins-Craig, PTSA president at Cajon Park School, spoke on behalf of language arts specialists and all of the hats that a school language arts specialist wears as an instrumental part of the school staff. Ms. Levins-Craig also spoke on behalf of the school vice principal position and the need for a full time vice principal for the safety of the children and the integrity of the school.

It was determined by the Board to consider each position on the list separately in order for voting to proceed.

Member McIntosh shared that although she does not support everything on this list she does support keeping the options open to meet the March 15 deadline date and can vote not to reduce at a later date, and will vote yes on all items. Member Abel concurred.

President El-Hajj said that each of these positions represents people and that the voting in no way reflects the value of the person or the position. She will vote yes because she knows that budget flexibility is needed and the need to comply with the law, not her lack of feelings or confidence in any person or position on the list.

Member Ryan said that there are some items on the list that she will not support and does not believe that the need for flexibility is reflected in the numbers called for on the resolution. Therefore, she may vote no on some items for the record.

Members Burns stated that this is a very difficult process and that there are some positions and numbers of positions that he cannot fundamentally support.

Members Ryan and Burns both stated that they did not support administration decreasing their work year as listed on Exhibit A. Member McIntosh agreed that it needs to be looked at closer to determine if it is prudent but notification is necessary by the deadline in order to provide the District the flexibility to make decisions at a later date. The consensus was to vote on reduction of administrators work year as one item.

The Board voted to approve Resolution #0304-024 with Exhibit B based upon the approval vote for each item in Exhibit A. The Resolution and each item were approved by a majority vote of Board members even though the votes were individually taken.

EXHIBIT A

Particular Kind of Service or Program	Number of Full Time Equivalent Positions Incl. Prep and Travel Periods Where Applicable	Motion	Second	Vote
<i>Management Support</i>	FTE			
Director II, Middle School At-Risk Programs	1.00	Abel	McIntosh	5 - 0
Principal	1.00	Abel	McIntosh	5 - 0
Vice Principal	4.00	McIntosh	Abel	4 - 1

				(Ryan-No)
Non-Management Support				
Miller-Unruh Language Arts Specialist	8.00	McIntosh	Abel	3 – 2 (Burns, Ryan-No)
Music	2.00	McIntosh		4 – 1 (Ryan-No)
Resource Specialist	2.00	Abel	McIntosh	5 - 0
Speech and Language Specialist	1.00	Abel	McIntosh	5 - 0
Psychologist	1.00	McIntosh	Abel	5 - 0
PARS Resource Teacher	1.00	Abel	McIntosh	5 - 0

Classroom Teaching Positions				
K-6 Teaching positions	23.00	McIntosh	Abel	3 – 2 (Burns, Ryan-No)
Special Education Teaching position	1.00	McIntosh	Abel	5 - 0
TOTAL	45.00			

Reduction in Work Year

Administrative Services	From	To			
Superintendent	246 Days	226 Days	McIntosh	Abel	3 – 2 (Burns, Ryan-No)
Assistant Superintendent	246 Days	226 Days			
Director II	246 Days	226 Days			
Director I	224 Days	204 Days			

1.6. Adoption of Resolution for Release of Temporary Certificated Employees

John Tofflemire shared that the District must provide notice to temporary District employees who may not be offered employment at the beginning of the next school year. The Board unanimously adopted Resolution #0304-025.

Motion: McIntosh
Second: Abel
Vote: 5 -0

1.7. Consideration of Fundraising Plan Proposed by Sycamore Canyon Parents

Maria Lenhoff, a Sycamore Canyon parent, presented the proposal to have a period of discovery to see what funds could be attained. The parents would like to know parameters of the Board. The parents are looking to large corporations such as Target, Hartford, and large technology companies. The parent group would like to know if a corporation would be allowed to put their name on the building and if things could be asked for that do not have dollars attached to them such as classroom supplies. The parent group would also like to see what the families were willing to provide. They are also interested in looking at where costs of the school operations could be reduced, possibly by using parent volunteers in place of employees.

Dr. Johnson shared that there are other places where parent groups have raised money and donated it to the school district for items that the general fund could not support. Parents would also need to understand that the District would still be in charge of school decision-making in order to maintain compliance and operation of the school to comply with the obligations and mandates of the State. The following will be addressed:

- Where the funds would be placed,
- Date by which funds would need to be raised,
- Amount needed to be raised, and
- How funds would be returned or used for other options if not enough money is raised.

Placement of Donated Funds

Carolyn Harness presented optional ways that funds could be processed. Funds could be accepted by the District as donations raised for Sycamore Canyon or placed in the Santee

School District Foundation, where a sub-account could be provided for Sycamore Canyon. Mrs. Harness said that the attorney had cautioned about the need for a real clear process as to what happens to the money if enough is not raised. It was suggested that a form be provided for donators to designate that the money be returned or used for specific programs. The group could also establish their own foundation and obtain non-profit status, but this option takes time.

Target Amount for Fundraising

Dr. Johnson stated that the target range for fundraising was recommended to be \$400,000, as that is the savings the District would realize if the school were to close.

Member Ryan said we would have to aim for \$400,000. If reductions can be made at the site the money may be less and should the costs be less, the foundation would be asked to raise less.

Member McIntosh wanted a clear message to the Sycamore Canyon community that if the money was raised this year, this would only save the school for the 04-05 school year.

President El-Hajj would like to only ask for \$200,000 in such a short time. Member Burns agrees that \$400,000 is a very large amount but it would not be responsible to say that if they raised only half that the Board would not look at closing the school.

Mrs. Lenhoff requested the Board to look at her proposal and requested an accountable amount to ask from corporations. She would prefer to use the foundation for the funds. Mrs. Lenhoff would also like to know what tangible items could be obtained.

President El-Hajj said that the Board would look at possible reductions to determine if a more accurate total of funds needed could be ascertained. This item will come to the Board at the March 16 2004 meeting for further discussion allowing time to collect information.

Deadline Date for Fundraising

President El-Hajj shared that should the Board decide that there are no other options but to close the school, parents would like to know the date for making this decision. A proposed target date for money to be raised is needed so that everyone will know what is happening in a timely manner. Member McIntosh stated that a date for a decision needs to come pretty quickly in order for parents and staff to make adjustments based on recommendations from the Santee School Closure Committee. Member Burns felt that it is clear that a date needs to be set soon, as parents want a decision. He is also uncomfortable about things being said in front of children that are adding to the discomfort. Member Ryan felt that there is a need for more information but a date should be chosen. Budget information will continue to come from the State and funding will be determined in May. She suggested that more information be collected during the week from administration and the community for selection of a date. Member Abel agreed that there was a need for more information to select a date. It was suggested to take the week to get the information to use to select a date for funds to be collected. The Board requested District staff to prepare information about boundaries and transportation in the event of closure while a date is being determined. The Board determined that they could not give a target date tonight but will put this item on next week's agenda.

Recommended process for returning the dollars.

Member Ryan would like the parents to decide and recommend the process to the Board. Mrs. Lenhoff said that the parents would provide a contingency plan when raising funds.

Mrs. Lenhoff asked about a corporation name on the building. Member Burns would not support changing the school name but would support putting their name on the building. Member McIntosh requested a copy of District policy that would address commercial advertising.

Mrs. Lenhoff also asked for information about the non-tangible items that could be requested.

President El-Hajj shared that using volunteers for school jobs would need to be discussed further and addressed with bargaining units.

Mrs. Lenhoff asked about closing a school when it saves only 10% of the budget shortfall and why Sycamore Canyon was chosen when it is the smallest school and closing a larger school may have a larger saving.

Penny Sallay, a Sycamore Canyon parent, spoke about Sycamore Canyon being a great school and that if the parents are willing to do the hard work it should send a message to the Board. Mrs. Sallay asked if parents can be assured that if they raise the money, that the money will be used for Sycamore Canyon and not for other schools. Mrs. Sallay also said that parents are being referred to other schools when moving into the Sycamore Canyon area.

Christine Blaylock, a Sycamore Canyon parent sought clarification that if the money is raised would Sycamore Canyon get to keep their resources, such as the reading specialist and speech teacher. She would like a list of resources available so that donators can designate where money could go if not enough funds were raised.

President El-Hajj addressed Mrs. Blaylock's concerns. She stated that the Board could not address keeping all of their resources at this time. In the past the District has had donations for specific schools and they stay at a specific school. The exception would be if not enough money was raised and that would be addressed with the donors at the time of donating.

Mrs. Harness, responding to a question from one parent asking if the District had turned away Sycamore Canyon students, stated that every effort is made to place a child into their school of residence but a student may be redirected if the grade level at that school is full. Students would be put on a waiting list and may return to their school of attendance, as space becomes available.

E. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Member Ryan wished to discuss legislation currently being taken before the Senate, SB1599. The purpose of the bill is to give the District more flexibility in using proceeds from the sale of property. Senator Hollingsworth is carrying this bill for Santee School District. Member Ryan would like to be the contact person because of her experience and will work with the superintendent. Board members agreed to have Member Ryan be the contact person. Dr. Johnson reported that ACSA would also be assisting the District with declining enrollment issues and legislation.

F. CLOSED SESSION

President El-Hajj announced that the Board would meet in closed session for:

1. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release
2. Conference with Labor Negotiator
Agency Negotiator: John Tofflemire, Director, Human Resources
Employee Organizations: Santee Teachers Association (STA)
California School Employees Association (CSEA)
3. Public Employee Performance Evaluation
Title: Superintendent
4. Conference with Real Property Negotiators
Location: Renzulli Site
Agency Negotiator: Carolyn Harness, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

The Board entered closed session at 9:30 p.m.

F. RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION/ ADJOURNMENT

The Board reconvened to public session at 11:15 p.m. No action was reported. The March 9, 2004, regular meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Dustin Burns, Clerk

Lisbeth A. Johnson, Ed.D., Secretary