

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

March 31, 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 Dan Bubke, an employee in technology, 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: McIntosh
Vote: 4-0 (El-Hajj absent)

B. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of the Board's Initial Proposal to Modify Articles of the Current Collective Bargaining Agreement Between Santee School District and California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 557.

President El-Hajj presented the Board's initial proposal to modify articles of the current collective bargaining agreement between Santee School District and CSEA, Chapter 557.

C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

President El-Hajj invited members of the audience to address the Board about any item not on the agenda. There were no public comments.

Teresa Edgerton, CSEA chapter president, asked the Board to consider providing a Golden Handshake to classified employees.

Stan Molina, CSEA chapter officer, asked the Board to consider providing a retirement incentive for classified employees.

BOARD WORKSHOP

D. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

Superintendent

- 1.1. Superintendent's Introduction to Fiscal Reports Presented for Special Board Budget Workshop
Superintendent Johnson provided an introduction to the reports from staff that would provide the Board information for fiscal management for 2004-2005. Dr. Johnson explained that the purpose of the reports was to provide a thorough picture of where we have been, where we are today, and where we are going for the future. Dr. Johnson shared that the Board might choose to discuss the information or make decisions on any of the reports from District committees and the County MAT team.

Business Services

- 2.1. Detailed Projected Budget and Enrollment Reports for 2004-05 including Additional Revenue Recapture Options through AB1274

Carolyn Harness reported on the anticipated revenue and expenditures for the 04-05 school year. Revenue for 04-05 is based on the prior year and will reflect the decrease in enrollment of 297 students in 03-04. The report reflects a shortfall of approximately \$3.5 million.

President El-Hajj thanked Mrs. Harness for the extensive information and invited the audience to speak on this item. No comments were received.

- 2.2. Reports from 2003-04 Committees on Proposed Budget Reductions for 2004-05

A. Budget Advisory Committee Report

Mrs. Harness reported the recommendations that the District Budget Advisory Committee had compiled and read the highest priority items recommended for reduction. The report will be made part of the minutes. Approximately ten members voted on these recommendations.

The committee also wanted to present Attachment B, a list of recommended reductions from 2002-03, although many of the items had been reduced last year.

B. Advisory Council for Instruction (ACI) Report

Dr. Shaw provided a report of the ACI committee's considerations for reduction. The items were prioritized with a 1 being the higher priority for reduction and a 3 being the lowest priority for reduction. The report also included an impact statement for each of the highest priority items. Dr. Shaw also shared that the instructional support department has already reduced \$1.1 million from general fund dollars over the last 2 years. The report will be made part of the minutes.

C. Management Assessment Team Report

Superintendent Johnson presented a summary of the report and recommendations of the Management Assistance Team (MAT) review. The MAT was comprised of a group of fiscal and educational experts who reviewed the District budget and interviewed numerous people including managers, employees, association representatives, and parents. Superintendent Johnson

introduced Laura Duzyk from the San Diego County Office of Education who chaired the MAT process.

President El-Hajj thanked the MAT team for their graciousness and generosity of their time and efforts and the information that they have provided.

Member Burns asked for clarification on the recommendation of replacing the Assistant Superintendent of Business instead of replacement in a Director position. Superintendent Johnson shared that their recommendation to replace the Assistant Superintendent was based on the facts that we are still at a somewhat high student population and the needs to have someone with critical expertise during this fiscal crisis.

Member Burns asked if management staff was included in the calculations presented if there were to be a salary and benefit freeze. Mrs. Harness stated that they were included.

BREAK.8:15-8:30 p.m.

2.3. Multi-year Fiscal Plan Summary Report and Recommendations

Superintendent Johnson provided a summary of the highlights of the Multi-year Fiscal Plan that was presented three parts in September, November, and December. The District has continued to seek annual remedies to the declining enrollment and fiscal decrease but there is a need to provide a long-range strategic master plan. The superintendent would like the Board to authorize administration to establish a task force to develop a master plan with the intention to sustain and enhance the long-range fiscal health in the District. This task force would seek to use experts in asset management and assist with moving ahead with legislative action.

The Superintendent also would like to initiate an Educational/Business Roundtable to collaborate with local corporations to assist in developing a vision of where the community of Santee is going, to promote and advocate for District issues, and to develop relationships and investments.

Dr Johnson also sees the need for internal stakeholders to have open and ongoing communication and together commit to developing a strong and fiscally sound District. She would like to initiate a Superintendent's Roundtable to communicate about issues and decisions and to help advocate for the District.

Member Burns fully supports these recommendations, and noted that they were also mentioned in the MAT report. Member Ryan is supportive but has some cautions; 1) that the groups must know that they act only as an advisory to the Board, not as decision making groups, and 2) that the charge and role of the groups should be made very clear. Member Abel concurred with the cautions.

The Board affirmed that the Superintendent should move forward with these recommendations and to present to the Board the specific charges and roles of these groups. The Board would like to be represented on the committees.

2.4. Report on PowerSchool Implementation Status and Proposed Reorganization for 2004-05

Bev Blaylock, Director of Technology, presented a report on the implementation status of PowerSchool, including the strengths and the challenges. She also brought recommendations based on the idea of the "Office of the Future." Ms. Blaylock recommended that four Student Records Secretaries be reduced. She recommended a job description change to Data Technician with four 8 hours Data Technician to be hired and located at the District Office. Her plan also included the purchase and implementation of an automated calling system to call parents regarding absences. Ms. Blaylock would like to establish a task force to look at the information and recommendation and bring their reports and recommendation back to the Board at a future meeting.

Teresa Edgerton, CSEA president, spoke on the great impact on office staff this last year with reduction of hours. She asked the Board to consider that if staff hours are decreased or staff is laid off, the work is reduced as well.

Christine Blaylock, a Sycamore Canyon parent, asked if there is an additional cost to upgrade the system and if it is more reasonable to have centralized information personnel rather than have an information person at each site.

President El-Hajj asked if the current Student Records Secretaries are able to call on absences from the school site. Ms. Blaylock stated that this function has never been completely fulfilled even prior to implementing PowerSchool. Ms. Blaylock shared that the purchase of an automated calling system could be funded by redevelopment money.

Member McIntosh supports a task force to study this recommendation and bring information back to the Board. Member Burns shared that he has visited six school offices and cannot ignore the fact that the school offices cannot continue to operate with fewer staff. Member Abel thinks the task force is a great idea and asked who the participants would be. Ms. Blaylock said that the model would be a small group comprised of representatives from office and site staff drawn from different schools. President El-Hajj asked if there were any parents on the technology committee that could also be representatives on this task force. Member McIntosh recommended that other school districts be investigated as to how they staff their school offices as some districts that are larger operate with smaller office staffs.

Members Burns and Ryan stated that pulling support staff out of the school is a concern for them, especially coverage and safety. The Board gave the approval to move forward with a task force to study the data information services of the District and the recommendations presented.

2.5. Report on Transportation Fees

Carolyn Harness reported on the current transportation provisions. The MAT report indicates that Santee's cost is higher than other similar districts.

Ms. Harness worked with the transportation director to investigate the cost savings to discontinue transportation for regular education students which would result in a savings of about \$100,000. She also reviewed the revenue of about \$19,000 that would be generated if the District implemented a fee for general education students who rode buses. Some other ways to obtain savings results is to stagger school bell schedules and to look at changing school site modified day schedules that cost additional dollars.

Administration requested discussion and directions from the Board.

Member McIntosh recalled that the Board directed that modified days should not impact the District and asked how it became that it currently does. Ms. Harness stated that different grade levels and school sites developed plans with plans to pay for the additional transportation costs; however, the schools are not currently paying for these costs. There is no cost to the District if all grades have the same modified day each month rather than modifications in those schedules by grade levels.

Member McIntosh stated that modified days need to be revisited as to not impact the District and return to the Board's initial agreement in allowing modified days.

Member Burns said that if these programs are costing the District extra money when the District is anticipating laying off employees, they should be looked at.

Dr. Johnson shared that schools are currently in the process of developing their proposed schedules for next year. Schools would need to know what the additional transportation cost may be as they put their proposals in place. Board members would like to see that the established direction for paying for modified days is put into practice.

Member Abel would like an analysis to find if more direct routes and staggered times would decrease costs. Board members requested that administration should bill schools for costs.

Member Ryan asked if the MAT team looked at the total cost for transportation in comparison with other districts because the number would reflect that Santee buses fewer students resulting in a higher cost per pupil.

Member Burns stated that to eliminate bussing would be ignoring the safety concerns that bussing was created to satisfy. He suggested that if students were charged, free and reduced lunch students could possibly pay a lesser fee rather than no fee.

President EL-Hajj stated that if 63% of the students bussed are special education maybe we have to look at scheduling for a bigger picture. Ms. Harness suggested that the special education coordinator do an analysis if classes were placed in the students' residence areas. Member McIntosh suggested that IEP teams look closely before providing transportation for an IEP students unless it is absolutely necessary. She also recommends we look at modified days and staggered schedules. Member McIntosh stated that sometimes parent responsibilities, such as providing transportation to school for their children, gets passed on to the school district. Member Burns stated that if there is no neighborhood school available, it is more difficult for parents and is clearly a frustration.

Member Burns asked for input from the Board about the three recommendations provided by administration. Member Abel would like to look at how much we can save first. President El-Hajj and members Ryan and Burns do not want to eliminate regular education transportation.

This item will return to the May 4, 2004 Board meeting with more information about class locations, staggered times, and modified days. No action was taken.

Human Resources

4.1. Certificated and Classified Employee Reduction Timelines

John Tofflemire presented to the Board the legal timelines that must be met in order to reduce service for classified and certificated employees. He reported that there were currently 27 retirements submitted and certificated hearings were to be held on April 19. No action was taken.

Superintendent

5.1. Tax Assessment Consideration for the November Election

Superintendent Johnson brought for discussion the idea of placing either a parcel tax or a general obligation bond measure on the November ballot. If the Board desires to look at placing a tax as a ballot measure, there is a need for a comprehensive organized plan and a plan for strategically influencing the County Taxpayers Association.

Members McIntosh and Ryan agreed that if we are going to the trouble of a ballot measure, we should go for a parcel tax because it provides more flexibility in spending. Member Abel feels that the community has spoken and that we should not go forward. Member Burns supports trying again and urges greater communication and that with a longer period of time for planning and publicity the District could succeed.

President El-Hajj stated that the community will not believe the crisis until the items that were to be funded by the parcel tax must be eliminated. She also thinks the discussion is futile until the budget decisions are made in June.

Member Burns suggested possibly bringing forth a lower assessment. Other members did not feel that the \$5 per month assessment was the issue.

Member Ryan stated that other districts have had to make the attempt several times. The reason the bonds finally pass is that the needs to the voters were finally communicated and the voters believed them. This time would be less expensive and we have some funds to run a better campaign.

Members Ryan and Burns will work with the Superintendent to establish a timeline and begin the planning process to put something on the ballot with a decision to be made at a later date.

E. BOARD COMMUNICATION

President El-Hajj invited Christine Blaylock to speak because she was unable to be here at Public Communication. As a parent and community member she said that she was unhappy with the priority list on the ballot measure. She did not feel that the community was aware of the real needs of the District and encouraged the Board to try again.

Maria Lenhoff, Sycamore Canyon parent, shared the fundraising successes to save Sycamore Canyon School. Her goal is to get a check from each parent and she has collected about \$7,500 at this time. Letters requesting donations have gone out to corporations. The committee will be using the PTA as a fiscal agent. Mrs. Lenhoff encouraged the District to communicate with businesses to get the word out about the budget crisis.

Board members expressed appreciation to Mrs. Lenhoff for keeping them informed and for her efforts in organizing the fundraising efforts. Mrs. Lenhoff is requesting help in accessing the San Diego Foundation to look for grants or philanthropists but has not been very successful. Member Ryan stated that the District would have to find a major donor to donate to the foundation specifically for the District.

Mrs. Lenhoff also has someone willing to donate three \$20,000 copiers and wanted to know if they could be sold for funds. She would need information of what the resale value may be and investigating the interest to purchase. It was suggested that the group look to see if the donors may be interested in donating services, such as copier maintenance.

Member Ryan said that the District Technology meetings conflict with her schedule. She needs a new Board representative. She also reported that she has received the language from Senator Hollingsworth for SB1599. The same language on another bill did not have a single no vote, but was vetoed by Governor Davis. She feels SB1599 has a very good chance of passing.

President El-Hajj reported on the library committee meeting and their upcoming writing campaign. They may be having another meeting on May 19.

All Board members said that they would be attending the Honoring Our Own Awards on May 13.

President El-Hajj reported that she attended the City meeting. The meeting involved discussion about EMF, Sycamore Canyon, safety drills, District property, and was very positive. President El-Hajj will provide the minutes of the meeting in the future.

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. Student Discipline Matters
4. Conference with Real Property Negotiators
Location: Renzulli Site
Agency Negotiator: Carolyn Harness, Assistant Superintendent,
Business Services

The Board entered closed session at 10:45 p.m.

G. RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

The Board reconvened to public session at 12:20 p.m. No action was reported. The March 31, 2004 special meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Dustin Burns, Clerk

Lisbeth A. Johnson, Ed.D, Secretary