

Board of Education
Santa Barbara Elementary and High School Districts

Minutes
February 25, 2003

Call To Order/Closed Session

The Santa Barbara Elementary and High School Districts' Board of Education met today in the Board Room of the Santa Barbara School Districts' Administration Center, 720 Santa Barbara Street, Santa Barbara, California. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m., and the Board adjourned to closed session. The President called the meeting to order in public session at 7:08 p.m. Mr. David Ortiz, La Colina Junior High School principal, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Nancy Harter, President
Robert Noël, Vice President
Ruth E. Green, Member
Fred Rifkin, Member
Lynn Rodriguez, Member

Staff Present: Deborah Flores, Ph.D., Superintendent
Michael Couch, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education
Diana Rigby, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Education
Priscilla Diamond, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Brian Sarvis, Ed.D., Director of Research and Technology
David Hetynok, Interim Director of Facilities and Operations
Julie Medina, Secretary to the Superintendent

Closed Session

The Board met on the following in Closed Session:

- Public Employment (Government Code 54957) *Personnel matters, to include: Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release.*
- Collective Bargaining (Government Code 3549.1 and 54957.6) *Conference with Labor Negotiator, Superintendent: Negotiations with the Santa Barbara Teachers Association.*
- Student Discipline (Education Code 48918) *Expulsion Cases: Numbers 02/03-36 and 02/03-37, (High School District). The Board must consider matters of student discipline in Closed Session unless the parents or students request an Open Session.*

Announcement of Closed Session Action

President Harter announced that the Board had given direction to the Superintendent regarding contract negotiations with the Santa Barbara Teachers Association.

Approval of Minutes

Fred Rifkin stated that the Board president was listed incorrectly.

■ Motion: To approve the Minutes of January 22, 2003, as corrected.

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

Receipt of Gifts

■ Motion: To receive with appreciation the donations to the Santa Barbara Elementary School District and Santa Barbara High School District from Ernest and Mary Beth Ferrel and Marci Cox Friedlander.

Moved: Lynn Rodriguez Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

Superintendent's Report
None

Student Board Member Report
Alexandra Burke, San Marcos High School student, reported on current activities at the three high schools.

Correspondence
None

Public Comments
Members of the Santa Barbara Junior High School Jazz Combo performed *The Pink Panther* and *My Funny Valentine*. The group included David Gulbranson (trumpet), John Salantay (alto sax), Shawn Cochran (tenor sax), Bret Noël (trumpet), and Avery Wheeler (base guitar).

Andrea Matthews and other students in the La Colina Junior High School GATE choral and music program read a poem written by Andrea.

Kate Smith announced that she was a candidate for school board and that she was calling for an independent audit of the school district so that the public would know where their tax monies are going. She suggested that the district be enchartered so each school can be site managed; she would create a parent/teacher support program in lieu of the truancy program, and that each elementary school become a parent cooperative. She suggested that the administrative budget be cut in half and that administrators go to three-fourths time.

Emil Torick, Santa Barbara Music Club, spoke against any changes that would weaken the elementary music program.

San Marcos students Hannah Elliott, Daniel Kiyoi, and Lana Smith spoke in support of electives.

Carolyn McGuay, Franklin Elementary School teacher, spoke in opposition of housing the Cesar Chavez Charter School on the Franklin campus.

Ken Loch spoke regarding Tennissance, a fulfillment of a standard through the fine arts.

Richard Reed, voiced concern that one member of the Board repeatedly has comments published in the newspaper and asked if this member represented the entire Board, as the public perceives that this member speaks for the entire Board.

Kate Rogalsky and several members of the Dos Pueblos High School academic decathlon, asked that an exception be made to the 25:1 student/teacher ratio requirement in the case of the academic decathlon class.

Justin Reynolds, San Marcos High School students, spoke against the recommendation to eliminate electives.

B.1 Parent Volunteer Project, VADA Student Center

Priscilla Diamond, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, stated that parents of students enrolled in Santa Barbara High School's Visual and Design Academy are interested in fundraising to renovate an existing storage/shop area on the school's campus. The renovations would lead to the creation of a teaching and conference facility for the program.

This item was postponed as the parents requesting this item were not present.

B.2 Budget Update and Possible Cuts

Deborah Flores stated that California has between a 26 to 34 billion-dollar budget deficit and that public education is the largest piece of the budget. Also, the 2003-2004 Governor's budget does not include a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and according to some fiscal experts there could be a deficit COLA. She explained that yearly the District depends on the COLA to cover increased costs.

Dr. Flores stated that much input has been received from the Board, staff, and the public on the proposed budget cuts presented at the February 11 Board meeting. As a result of this feedback, revisions have been made to the February 11 proposal and she proceeded to review these revisions.

Board questions/comments followed.

Grace Florez, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), stated that representatives from LULAC, Latinos for Better Government, El Congreso of UCSB, Latino Action Voter Alliance, high school MECHA's, and the Multi-Cultural Education Consortium, have met and developed a response to the recommended budget reductions. She reviewed the budget principles and recommended budget reductions developed by these Latino organizations.

Board members requested clarification regarding: the elimination of elementary assessments; the 25:1 student/teacher ratio requirement particularly the effect on electives; class size reduction encroachment on the general fund, class size increase for grades 4-6 (it was noted that class size is a negotiable item), an administrative intern versus an assistant principal at La Cumbre Middle School; fundraising for the instrumental music program by the Santa Barbara Public Education Foundation.

Melitta Haslin, Roosevelt parent, reported that the Roosevelt community is conducting a round table discussion on March 4 to develop an alternative to the budget reduction proposal and invited the public to attend.

The following persons spoke in support of electives: Shell Sumeral, Jeffrey Bell, Amanda Elliott, Michael Kiyoi, Jim Field, Julie Holmes, Erin Morris, Louis Troll, Liana Aranita, Dawn Elliott, Jane Adabo, Joe Campanelli, Marianne Morris, Ann Cumming, David Holmes, Ian Christensen, Mike Odello, Debra Teton, Linelle Glass, Charles Ortega, Steven Romofsky, Loretta Reynolds, Jeff Peterson, and Jerry Chiu.

Lupe Luna Martinez spoke against cutting the current transportation program.

The following persons spoke in support of librarians: Shannon Curtis, Heather McBride, Susan Billig, Linelle Glass.

The following persons spoke in support of the instrumental music program: Linda Hedgepeth, Les Rose, Martha Salas.

Tina Finnuchi, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara Public Education Foundation, stated that in 2002 the Foundation voted on elementary school music as their primary fundraising initiative for the next 3-5 years, entitled *Keep the Beat*. The goal of *Keep the Beat* is to expand the program and develop an endowment to secure the program.

Jorge Bernabe, a Santa Barbara City College student, urged community members to stand up and voice their concerns to Governor Gray Davis.

Ken Rivas, Classified School Employees Association president, voiced concern about the recommended cuts to secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff.

Maruja Estay urged the Board to address the educational needs of the majority, not the minority, when making budget decisions. She also addressed the need to eliminate the condition of defacto segregation and discrimination of Latino students.

Annette Cordero voiced her concern regarding the elimination of the elective courses such as the ethnic studies, ethnic literature, and the social dialogue courses. She also addressed the administrative positions currently being funded through categorical funds. In this time of economic uncertainty, she asked if the current level of categorical funding is not received, will the district have to absorb the funds to maintain these positions.

Charles Kaska and Haide Balster urged the Board to not implement the International Baccalaureate program. In addition, Mr. Kaska proposed cutting the school board salaries to zero.

Roxanne Crawford proposed that in lieu of layoffs and cutting programs that an across the Board reduction in wages be implemented.

Kelly Aviña proposed researching the possibility of closing down the entire district for a week or two, thus everyone would share in the financial burden.

Pam Kinsley, Harding School 3rd grade teacher and representing the Santa Barbara Teachers Association, proposed an ongoing budget committee comprised of staff, teachers, parents, and other constituencies that would meet on a monthly basis. This would allow items to be discussed throughout the year and when budget cuts are needed it will be a proactive process rather than a reactive process. She also voiced concern regarding the lack of preparation for this meeting. Due to the expected large crowd, it should have been moved to a larger meeting room.

Liana Arinita, Loretta Reynolds, Tony Fischer, and Jerry Chiu also spoke in support of maintaining the assistant principals.

Clark Sayre suggested looking at the P.E. requirements, as students can get credit for dance, theatre, marching band, etc; using the reserve money; looking at a creative way to use SIP money; questioned the need for the PR position; having less student aids at the junior high level and putting students back into a learning situation; cutting electives would result in a loss of revenues and students will opt for private schools.

Tony Fischer distributed to the Board a three-page list of items incurred by the administration under the budgetary category of “services and operating expenses.” He reported that current expenditures under this category total 1.3 million dollars.

Sarah Griffin suggested that a fairer distribution of assistant principals would be a split position between Franklin and La Cumbre Middle Schools, which would bring the ratio of both schools in line with their peer school; the need to examine utility costs; the need to end draining funds away from many students to fund specialty programs for a few students. She strongly urged the Board to fill the accountant position in order to have accurate and timely reporting of the District’s financial position, which has been a problem in the past. She also asked Ms. Diamond to explain how people can make donations to the District and be able to direct the funds to the program that they wish to support.

Board members asked for additional information on what an across the Board cut would look like (a 5% cut for example); staffing ratios in the special education program; an equitable allocation of funds to the academies; co-curricular salaries; cost of athletic trainers; librarians/library technicians, and the possible elimination of one assistant superintendent.

B.3 Elementary GATE Student Achievement Gains

This item was postponed.

B.4 API Results, Base 2002

This item was postponed.

C.1 Home-to-School Transportation (Elementary)

Dr. Flores stated that she had talked with Paula Sauvadon, of STA, and STA agreed that this item could be continued.

Sarah Griffin urged the Board to make deeper cuts in this area, as there are far greater needs for these funds. She suggested eliminating the van which transports one child to Roosevelt who lives in the Cleveland attendance area, stressed the need to strictly enforce the District’s existing inter-district policy, and recommended that students living in the Cottage Hospital area and attend Adams should walk to school.

C.2 Distribution of Proceeds from the Sale of John Hancock Financial Services, Inc. Stock
Sarah Griffin urged the Board to not designate these funds for specific purposes. She suggested that these funds be put into the general fund or used to offset increased costs in employee benefits.

Tony Fischer also supported putting these monies in the general fund and that the Board decide how to use the funds after the budget has been adopted.

■ Motion: That the Board of Education approve putting these funds, on a prorata basis, in the elementary and secondary general fund without any allocation as to what programs they can be used for.

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

C.3 SMHS/Las Vegas, Nevada WGI Regional Competition for Drum Line and Color Guard and SMHS/Dayton, Ohio WGI National Competition for Drum Line

■ Motion: That the Board of Education approve the SMHS field trips to Las Vegas, Nevada (March 7-9, 2003) and Dayton, Ohio (April 9-13, 2003).

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

C.4 Out-of-State Travel and Expenses in Excess of \$500

■ Motion: That the Board of Education approve out-of-state travel and expenses in excess of \$500 for Joan Jamieson, Santa Barbara Community Academy (SBCA) principal and SBCA teachers Tamara Venzor, Jeanne Harris, Cathy Neushel, Aran Burke, Jennifer Hardin, Erin Michealsen, Dixie Moore, Tim Quiroz, William Mallory, Amy Alzina, Isabel Hernandez, and Roberta Ortega; Judy Hartman, La Cumbre Middle School teacher; and Margaret Mason, Dos Pueblos High School teacher.

Moved: Lynn Rodriguez Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

C.5 Student Expulsions

■ Motion: Case Number 2002/03-36 (High School District) – That the Board uphold the findings and recommendations of the Administrative Hearing Panel to expel for one semester, and uphold the recommended rehabilitation plan with the exception that the student remain on home/hospital schooling through Friday, March 14; that the student enroll at El Puente beginning Monday, March 17; and that upon satisfactory completion of the recommended rehabilitation plan, the student may reenroll in the school from which he/she was expelled.

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green

Ayes: 4 Noes: 0 Absent: 0 Abstain: Robert Noël

■ Motion: Case Number 2002/03-37 (High School District) – That the Board uphold the Administrative Hearing Panel's recommendation to expel for the present semester, which ends June 2003, and uphold the recommended rehabilitation plan.

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green

Ayes: 4 Noes: 0 Absent: 0 Abstain: Robert Noël

D. Approval of Consent Agenda

■ Motion: To approve the Consent Agenda, as amended:

D.1 Personnel Action Items

D.2 Purchase Orders

D.3 Warrants

D.4 Denial of Liability Claims Filed Against Santa Barbara High School District and Santa Barbara High School (Claims #02/03-01 and 02/03-02)

D.6 Acceptance of Completed Contracts

Moved: Fred Rifkin Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed Unanimously

D.5 Award of Bid – Kitchen Renovation, Parma Children's Center

In response to Robert Noël's question regarding funding for this project, staff reported that Child Development grant monies will be used.

- Motion: That the Board of Education award the contract in the amount of \$51,000 to Echnact Construction Corporation for the Parma Children's Center kitchen renovation. Funding for the project will come from a Child Development Grant.

Moved: Robert Noël Seconded: Ruth Green Vote: Passed unanimously

E. Coming Events

None

F. Board Comments

Nancy Harter reported receipt of a note requesting a bigger venue for the next Board meeting. Board members discussed costs for conducting meetings at a location other than the Board Room. It was the consensus of the Board to conduct the next meeting at a larger venue and that the community be notified appropriately.

G. Future Agenda Items

Deborah Flores suggested that a Board meeting be held on March 4 to specifically deal with teacher layoffs, to allow staff time to hand deliver layoff notices.

Robert Noël requested a report on direct and indirect costs associated with the athletic and co-curricular programs, as well as special education.

Lynn Rodriguez requested a presentation on the special education program.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Meeting was adjourned at 12:12 a.m. The next Regular Meeting of the Board will be Tuesday, March 11, 2003, at 7:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Robert Noël, Vice President, Board of Education

Adopted by Board of Education on April 22, 2003