

**LA CAÑADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

June 24, 2008

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of La Cañada Unified School District was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Susan Boyd on June 24, 2008, in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Cañada, California. Present were Board Members Susan Boyd, Joel Peterson, Jeanne Broberg, Cindy Wilcox and Scott Tracy.

WORKSHOP

A workshop to solicit Governing Board input on the branding campaign began at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Stratton stated that one of the goals of the Governing Board is a branding campaign. In order to address this goal, the Governing Board approved entering into a contract with Jacobson Communications, Inc. to provide related services for the district. The first phase of the contract is for Jacobson Communications, Inc. to gather input from stakeholders on the accomplishments, goals and challenges of the district. Staff from Jacobson Communications, Inc. will be meeting with parents, students, staff and members of the community for input. They have already met with management team and members from the classified staff. Three Jacobson Communications, Inc representatives including President Seth Jacobson were present to solicit input from the Governing Board.

Jacobson Communications, Inc. and the Governing Board discussed the community perception of private schools vs. public schools. Class sizes were discussed. It was agreed that class size is one of the top concerns for parents in the community. Mr. Jacobson stated that in his research, class size does come up as a concern but the quality of education is judged to be more important. Mr. Tracy stated that reducing class size is a major goal of the Governing Board and reported that the district's class sizes are significantly higher than its peers.

An additional concern that came up in Mr. Jacobson's research was the junior high being on the high school campus. Mr. Peterson talked about the perception of not having a middle school and cited data supporting the 7 – 12 model and feels this is a strength of the district. Mr. Tracy agreed and reported that there are additional resources available to our 7 – 8 students that would otherwise not be available to them if it weren't a 7 – 12 campus. Some of the benefits to 7 – 12 include additional extra curricular courses, band, advanced math and language classes, music, choir and the easier transition between middle school and high school. Mrs. Broberg mentioned ways we continue to make 7-8 its own school while situated on the high school campus. Included were separate lunches, the new 7-8 building, and separate PTA with its focus benefiting the 7th and 8th graders. It was felt that these benefits were not being communicated to the parents of upcoming middle school students early enough.

Mrs. Broberg suggested the district provide more information about the programs the district has available to our students. She also stated that CIF and athletic accomplishments are important. It was agreed that many of the district's accomplishments are not fully known by the community.

Mr. Peterson mentioned the importance of colleges and universities recognizing the special strengths of the LCUSD program. Mrs. Boyd talked about core curriculum programs that are enhanced by tapping into community resources.

Mr. Jacobson asked Governing Board members if they want to report on all of the district's assets or are they interested in focusing on a few points. Mr. Peterson asked Mr. Jacobson to assist in choosing what will work best to get to who the district wants to address – colleges, school age families and community. Mrs. Boyd suggested that if we are trying to attract from the outside we should report that we are a town of 25,000 people that revolves around education; we are close to Los Angeles but live in "Mayberry"; we maintain strong support for kids through athletics, music and art. This is a great

community to raise children in. Four out of five girls are involved in Girl Scouts. Mr. Peterson added that private schools don't have the community support our district has. The City of La Cañada Flintridge provides support to maintain athletic fields and our auditorium and recently provided a grant for the district's music program. Many local businesses donate to the district, and we have tremendous support from the Educational Foundation. It was agreed that the community is not aware of the JPL, CalTech and entertainment resources available to the district. Mr. Tracy reported that over the past 10 years approximately 40% of LCHS graduating seniors were accepted to one or more campus(es) of the University of California. Many other benefits of the district were discussed and communicated to Jacobson Communications.

The staff of Jacobson Communications stated that there is a vast amount of information that needs to be collected and communicated. To get a well-rounded perspective on the District, Mr. Stratton and the Jacobson staff agreed that it would be beneficial for the focus groups to include parents who have transferred students out of public schools and enrolled them in private schools. It is apparent there is great respect and pride in the district's educational system. Jacobson's job is to put together the best message to the most important audience. Jacobson Communications thanked the Governing Board and reported that the firm will continue to meet with staff, parents and the community for additional input.

The workshop concluded at 6:20 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

The Governing Board adjourned to Closed Session at 6:20 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California. Present were the five Governing Board members, Superintendent James Stratton, Assistant Superintendent Mike Leininger and Business Consultant Stephen Hodgson. Closed session adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Susan Boyd, President
Mr. Joel Peterson, Vice President
Mrs. Jeanne Broberg, Clerk
Mrs. Cindy Wilcox, Member
Mr. Scott Tracy, Member

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board was reconvened at 7:03 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada. Present were the five Governing Board Members, Mr. Stratton, Dr. Leininger, Dr. Hodgson and Executive Secretary to the Superintendent Kim Bergner. There were approximately 25 people in the audience. Mrs. Boyd asked La Cañada High School Assistant Principal Kevin Buchanan to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Mrs. Boyd reported there was no action taken in closed session.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Mr. Peterson requested item 3f be moved to be 1h.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Boyd stated that the minutes of the April 15, 2008, meeting of the Governing Board had been distributed to the Governing Board members in advance for review. Mrs. Wilcox requested additional language be added to the minutes. The Governing Board approved the additional language. The

minutes of April 15, 2008, were approved as amended.

REPORTS

1. Superintendent's Report

a) Student Recognition – The LCHS Equestrian team was recognized for an outstanding season. Mr. Buchanan, La Cañada High School Assistant Principal, was present to assist with the presentation. Ms. La Shawne Harrison, team advisor, was present to talk about the accomplishments of the team. Governing Board President Mrs. Boyd distributed certificates to the team members present.

b) Update on Parcel Tax Consultant Research – Mr. Stratton stated this is an opportunity for Governing Board members and staff to report on their parcel tax consultant research. Answers to many of the Governing Board's questions were provided in TWIR through a memo from Dr. Hodgson. However, Governing Board members have additionally had the opportunity to talk to colleagues in other districts for additional information and this is the opportunity to share that information. This item will come back at the next Governing Board meeting with a recommendation from staff.

Mrs. Broberg reported on she and Susan Boyd's meeting with Laura Olhasso, whose professional years were spent with political campaigns. Mrs. Olhasso worked with the district on the 1995 and 1999 bond. Mrs. Olhasso thinks a survey is very important. Mrs. Olhasso found Tramutola's proposal very expensive but needed additional information on what the expense covers. Mrs. Olhasso suggested that a steering committee be brought into the process. Mrs. Boyd stated that Mrs. Olhasso validated the steps that Tramutola said we would have to go through. Mr. Tracy reported that Mrs. Olhasso felt that the survey should be done before any structuring of specific proposal language. Mrs. Boyd stated that Tramutola's suggestion was that the phone survey should come right up front. Mr. Stratton asked Dr. Hodgson for clarification on George K. Baum's recommendation. Dr. Hodgson clarified that George K. Baum suggested two surveys one to help structure the proposal and one after the proposed parcel has been structured.

Mr. Tracy reported that he and Mr. Peterson had lunch with the past president of the San Marino Governing Board who used Tramutola for San Marino's most recent renewal of the Parcel Tax. He was very complimentary toward Tramutola but felt they weren't the only option and provided the name of other companies. Mr. Peterson reported that what Tramutola offered San Marino was not what they offered us. ~~San Marino Unified didn't need the full services of Tramutola because it was a Parcel Tax renewal.~~ Mr. Tracy took away from the meeting that we don't have to pick a fully priced, all-inclusive package from Tramutola. Mr. Tracy doesn't feel it should be all or nothing. Mr. Tracy was unable to contact Palos Verdes Unified for input.

Mr. Peterson felt that if we can identify the campaign committee and bring the resources to them, all we need to do upfront is the survey. Mr. Tracy reported that Mrs. Olhasso's advice was to engage the services of the opinion poller and based on that step the rest would be easy to unfold. Mr. Stratton clarified that earlier ^{Staff} the Governing Board was leaning toward George K. Baum because we could go with just the survey, but that now the Governing Board is suggesting we unbundle Tramutola services.

Mrs. Wilcox felt, that based on her experience from the last parcel tax, that we need help to get a campaign focused. She doesn't want to overestimate the Board's ability to hone the message and to reach the target audience. Mr. Peterson agreed that the district may need help but he doesn't feel it's the Governing Board's role to campaign for the parcel tax: that is the role of the campaign committee. He stated that it's the Governing Board's role to put the option out to

the community for the Parcel Tax but not to make the persuasive argument and to campaign for the Parcel Tax.

Mrs. Boyd disagreed and stated that the fact that the Governing Board would not be out there talking to the community and getting the message out there to help pass the campaign would be like running for office and not talking to anyone about why you are running. Mrs. Boyd feels it's the Governing Board's responsibility to support the decision to have the election and to communicate why the Governing Board is supporting the campaign. Mr. Peterson stated that as the Board we have an obligation to explain why we are putting it on the ballot and what we see as the benefits but we should also explain what the costs would be for the community. Each member is free to explain the decision but doesn't necessarily have to talk about how s/he will vote.

Mrs. Wilcox stated that the Governing Board votes on public legislation action as a Board and feels that we should all as Governing Board members support the decision and campaign for the parcel tax and get the information out there.

Mr. Stratton stated if we can unbundle Tramutola that would be an option; another would be to go with George K. Baum. Dr. Hodgson reported that San Marino Unified contracted under a separate contract for the survey.

Mr. Tracy thinks it's important who we choose, and suggested that we go with someone who is experienced with a Parcel Tax. Mr. Tracy discussed the value of going with someone with experience. Mr. Stratton asked if that means he is suggesting that we go with Tramutola if the services can be unbundled.

Mr. Tracy strongly recommended that all Governing Board members review thoroughly Tramutola's "Winning Tax Elections, Steps to Success" and emphasized the following two passages: 1) "People expect that before they are asked to support a tax increase, public officials will have done their job in eliminating projects and programs that are not essential. Voters must be confident that all other resources have been utilized BEFORE being asked to raise taxes. In short the public has to be convinced that the money is really needed, and that there is no alternative other than passing the tax measure" and 2) "If the leaders of the organization are not completely and totally behind the measure and are not willing to sacrifice time and effort on its behalf, it is unlikely that the measure will pass...To gain public support there has to be, above all, passion and commitment from the leaders of the organization."

Mr. Stratton thanked the Governing Board for the information provided.

2. President's Report

Mrs. Boyd deferred her report.

3. Assistant Superintendent of Facilities and Operations Report

a) Construction Update

Dr. Leininger reported that asbestos abatement at Palm Crest Elementary has taken place and demolition will begin tomorrow. Osborn Architects is meeting with DSA tomorrow for Paradise Canyon Elementary. Building A has gone to DSA and we are now waiting for them to look at the plans. Dr. Leininger is hopeful this won't take much time. The Oak Grove restroom project is down to final electrical, water and sewer. The ramping is done and the railings are going up. To be safe, we are looking at a couple of weeks before opening the restrooms. Dr. Leininger will work with the City to schedule a ribbon cutting.

OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS BOARD

The following audience members addressed the Board:

None

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Approval of 2008-09 Budget, R158-07-08
The hearing began at 7:56 p.m. There being no public comment the hearing was closed at 7:57.
2. Statement of Assurance for Standards Alignment for Geometry, Resolution 20-07-08.
The hearing began at 7:57 p.m. There being no public comment the hearing was closed at 7:58.
3. Statement of Assurance for Standards Alignment for Forensics, Resolution 21-07-08.
The hearing began at 7:58 p.m. There being no public comment the hearing was closed at 7:59.

PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS

1. First Reading

- a. ***2008-09 Consolidated Application, R170-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Peterson) to approve the 2008-09 Consolidated Application, R170-07-08. Mr. Stratton clarified that what we are approving is the application for consolidated funds. The amount we get is predetermined and includes Title II, Title III, Title V and categoricals like school safety, TUPE and 10th grade counseling. The motion to approve the 2008-09 Consolidated Application was adopted unanimously.
- b. **Textbook Adoption: 7/8 Algebra I, R167-07-08.** This item is first reading only. Mr. Stratton stated that this is for a textbook for 8th grade Algebra. This is a change from the current text. Mr. Stratton stated that teachers will meet for an articulation meeting at the beginning of the year to align with 9th grade Algebra. This item will come back at the next regularly scheduled meeting for approval.
- c. **Statement of Assurance for Standards Alignment for Geometry, Resolution 20-070-8.** This item is first reading only.
- d. **Statement of Assurance for Standards Alignment for Forensics Science for High School, Resolution 20-070-8.** This item is first reading only.
Items c and d were discussed together. Approval of the Statement of Assurance is required and states that the textbooks addressed meet state standards. Both items will come back at the next regularly scheduled meeting for approval.
- e. ***Approval of Lease Agreement with Child Education Center, R165-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Tracy) to approve the Lease Agreement with the Child Education Center. Dr. Hodgson stated that this approval request is for a ten year lease. Mrs. Boyd asked at what point a lease is in default. Dr. Hodgson stated that that it is at the Governing Board's discretion. Mr. Peterson asked about the rate and what the prevailing rate is. Dr. Leininger reported that getting to the current rate has been a 5 year process. Mr. Stratton clarified that the rate has not been compared to the commercial rate but to the school property rate. The motion to approve the Lease Agreement with Child Education Center was adopted unanimously.
- f. ***Approval of Lease Agreement with Renaissance Academy, R166-070-8.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Tracy) to approve the Lease Agreement with Renaissance Academy. Dr. Hodgson provided background on this request. Renaissance Academy is currently in arrears. It will be making back payments by July 15th. The school will be paying the district approximately \$68,000 during the month of July. This approval is conditional upon those payments. Renaissance is familiar with the conditions attached to this renewal. Mrs. Boyd asked what consequences have been set up if the school does not meet its obligations. Dr. Hodgson discussed the default provisions of the lease. Mr. Peterson asked about the downside of putting demand on Renaissance and not working with the tenant. Mr. Stratton clarified that the

district is working with Renaissance to help maintain the lease. The motion to approve the Lease Agreement with Renaissance Academy was adopted unanimously.

- g. ***5 Year Deferred Maintenance Plan, R177-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Wilcox/Broberg) to approve the 5 year Deferred Maintenance Plan. Dr. Leininger reported that the state requires that the district have a 5 year deferred maintenance plan in place in order to receive deferred maintenance funds. This is an update that would go out through the 5th fiscal year of 2011. The state is not funding deferred maintenance matches at this time; however the report is still required. Dr. Leininger discussed the plan. The Board provided direction to move PCR to the 08-09 column and move the FIS figure back to 2010-11. The motion to approve the 5 Year Deferred Maintenance Plan was adopted unanimously.
- h. **Approval of Contract Amendment for Consultant Services, R174-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Peterson) to approve the contract amendment for consultant services. Mr. Peterson requested a change to the indemnification clause and requested lawyers provide a broader indemnity statement. Mr. Stratton clarified that this is the current legal recommendation. Mr. Peterson requested that the contract include consequences for error or negligence. Mr. Hodgson's consultant insurance was discussed. Mr. Peterson withdrew his request for additional language. The motion to approve the contract amendment for consultant services was adopted unanimously.

2. Second Reading

- a. **Approval of 2008-09 Budget, R158-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Wilcox) to approve the 2008-09 Budget. Dr. Hodgson reported that the proposed budget was approved on June 30, 2008. Since that date, there haven't been any changes to the Governor's budget. The District is hoping to have a state budget by August. Dr. Hodgson reviewed the assumptions and the request for intra/inter fund transfers. Mr. Stratton asked about COLA and the projected deficit for 2009-10. Dr. Hodgson clarified COLA and the deficit. Mrs. Wilcox asked about the special education assumption. Mr. Stratton stated that he feels the special education assumption is a realistic number. The Governing Board agreed to remove the federal forest funding from the assumptions page. Mr. Tracy asked how the special education assumption was identified. Dr. Hodgson responded that this reflects payments that have been agreed to. Mr. Tracy asked what carryover looks like for this year. Dr. Hodgson reported that there will be changes in interest earnings and carryover dollars but we really don't close the books until mid August so we will have a better idea as we go. Interest statements come from the County between August and September. The motion to approve the 2008-09 Budget was adopted unanimously.
- b. **School Site Plans, R147-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Peterson) to approve the School Site Plans, R174-07-08. Mr. Stratton explained that the key page is the budget page because it outlines how the proposed funds will be spent. Mrs. Wilcox talked about cluster scores and stated she would like the high school to use the same template as the elementary schools. Mr. Stratton clarified the request and asked the high school to analyze the scores prior to setting the goals for next year. Mr. Peterson stated that the elementary school template does not appear to be consistent. Mr. Stratton clarified that these are being generated by the individual site councils. There was discussion regarding having all plans follow the same template. Mr. Stratton suggested having the principals at the Governing Board meeting in which the plans are submitted for approval instead of changing the template of the plans. Mr. Stratton stated that we need to be clear on the purpose of the report. Mrs. Boyd talked about the School Site Council and how the budget is created. The committee includes students, parents, and staff to discuss how the money is going to be spent. After discussion on how to improve the information in the Site Plan, the Governing Board provided direction that principals attend the meeting next year at first reading to address what data guided the plan. The motion to approve the School Site Plans was adopted unanimously.

- c. **Contract Renewal for Sodexho, R150-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Peterson) to approve the contract renewal for Sodexho, R150-07-08. Dr. Leininger reported that we have received an updated amendment from Sodexho clarifying the consultant fee. Mrs. Boyd asked if the breakeven figures include the consultant fee of \$48,000. The Governing Board asked for a 2008-09 Food Services budget and assumptions in TWIR. Mrs. Wilcox expressed her concern with renewing the contract. The motion to approve the contract renewal for Sodexho was adopted 4:1 with Mrs. Wilcox voting against the renewal.
- d. **Request to go to Bid for Resurfacing/Reconditioning Tennis Courts at LCHS, R154-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Tracy/Broberg) to approve the Request to go to bid for resurfacing/reconditioning Tennis Courts at LCHS, R154-07-08. Dr. Leininger confirmed that the City of La Cañada Flintridge formally approved support of the 6th tennis court. The Athletic department is in favor of the 6th court. However, the Physical Education department expressed concern with the loss of the handball courts. La Cañada High School principal Damon Dragos and Dr. Leininger met with staff and suggested putting the handball courts on the updated facilities master plan. Dr. Leininger will bring back a recommendation to go to bid at the July meeting. Dr. Leininger thought the women's season would be at the Country Club. The motion to approve the request to go to bid for resurfacing/reconditioning tennis courts at LCHS was adopted unanimously.

3. Consent Agenda

It was moved and seconded (Broberg/Tracy) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion to approve the Consent Agenda was adopted unanimously.

- a. **Personnel Report, P23-07-08.** The Board approved the following Personnel Items: *Certificated:* New Hires: Cindy Blandford, Shannon Brascia, Jeffrey Brookey, Cynthia Hayes, Joshua Spiegel, Rachel Ware Zool. Leave of Absence: Nicole Baird. Retirement: Carol Granz, Evy Hamm, Nancy Low, Donald Schaafsma. Resignation: Stephanie Van Belle. Second Semester BTSA Support Providers: Jackie Castro, Ingrid Jaimes, Mary Walsten, Rob Hajek, Pat Harris, Mary Lou Langedyke, Pam Watts. *Classified:* New Hires: Christine Connelly, Lisa Kellogg, Heaja Kim, Vanessa Soto. Modifications: Maria Josefina Sosa, Martiza Hernandez, Janek Babakhanean, Dzhemma Grigoryan, Helen Manukyan, Adrene Manukova, Dora Gonzalez, Seda Minasian, Seham Hanna. Resignation: Christine Connelly, Jason Kelly, Tobias Lewsadder, Evelyn Park.
- b. **Authorization to Make Appropriation Transfers, R164-07-08.** The Governing Board approved the authorization to make appropriation transfers.
- c. **Adjustment of Employees' Work Year, R173-07-08.** The Governing Board approved the adjustment of employees work year for 2008-09 and 2009-10.
- d. **Special Activities: LCHS Water Polo, R175-07-08.** The Governing Board approved the LCHS Water Polo trips to Hungary and Menlo, California.
- e. **Quarterly Report on Williams Uniform Complaints, R174-07-08.** The Governing Board approved the quarterly report on Williams Uniform Complaints.
- f. **Approval of Contract Amendment for Consultant Services, R174-07-08.** This was moved to first reading.
- g. **Field Trip Summary, R168-07-08.** The Governing Board reviewed and accepted the 2007-08 Field Trip Summary report.
- h. **Purchase Order List #15.** The Board approved Purchase Order List #15.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Superintendent Evaluation was calendared for Tuesday, July 1, at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Peterson reported on the City Council budget process and stated he is impressed by the City support. Mr. Peterson asked if the Board President could prepare a letter of appreciation to the City. Mrs. Boyd agreed.

Mr. Peterson reported that the district has been prepaying on the sewer loan with the City. Mr. Tracy suggested the note be reviewed; it is his recollection that there is a discount for prepayment. Mr. Stratton will ask Dr. Hodgson to research the loan and to prepare a memo for TWIR.

Mr. Stratton asked the Governing Board for its view on school groups approaching the City or the Educational Foundation on their own without coordinating their requests through administration. There was Board discussion and it was agreed that hopefully a recent specific incident was an anomaly and no further action will be required.

Mr. Tracy reported that the end of the year breakfast was well done and well received.

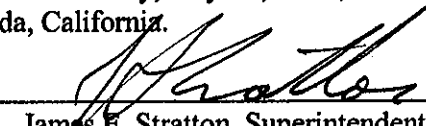
Mrs. Wilcox said that she appreciated the loading capacity information provided in TWIR and asked if the architects are aware of the Governing Board's class size reduction goals. Dr. Leininger confirmed that they are aware of the Governing Board's class size reduction goals.

Mrs. Wilcox is interested in a survey of parents on how the return of tests is going and asked if there is Governing Board support. The Governing Board was in agreement to do a survey. Mr. Stratton asked for clarification on the survey. Mr. Stratton would like this to be a transparent survey and have staff support. Mr. Peterson agreed. It was agreed that the survey would be worked on and sent out after first semester.

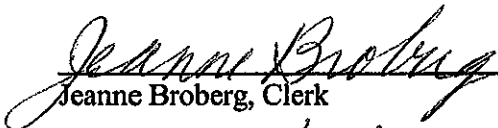
Mr. Tracy asked if Mr. Stratton would be interested in surveying seniors on their educational experience. Mr. Stratton responded positively and stated that the information could be used for the branding campaign.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m. The Next Regular Meeting of the Governing Board will be held on Tuesday, July 15, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California.


James E. Stratton, Superintendent
Secretary to the Governing Board

MINUTES APPROVED


Jeanne Broberg, Clerk

8/12/08

Date