

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

September 11, 2007

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of La Cañada Unified School District was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Scott Tracy on September 11, 2007, in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Cañada, California. Present were Board Members Scott Tracy, Jinny Dalbeck, Susan Boyd, Cindy Wilcox, and Joel Peterson.

CLOSED SESSION

The Governing Board adjourned to Closed Session at 5:00 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California. Present were the five Board Members, Superintendent James Stratton, Deputy Superintendent Bill Loose and Assistant Superintendent Mike Leininger. Closed session adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Mr. Scott Tracy, President
- Mrs. Susan Boyd, Vice President
- Mr. Joel Peterson, Clerk
- Mrs. Jinny Dalbeck, Member
- Mrs. Cindy Wilcox, Member

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board was reconvened at 7:09 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada. Present were the five Governing Board Members, Mr. Stratton, Dr. Loose, Dr. Leininger and Executive Secretary to the Superintendent Kim Bergner. There were approximately 70 people in the audience. Mr. Tracy asked Girl Scout Troop #739 to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Board recognized a moment of silence in remembrance of those who died on September 11, 2001.

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Tracy reported there was no action taken in closed session.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

No agenda modifications were requested.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tracy stated that the minutes of the June 26, 2007, and July 10, 2007, meetings of the Governing Board had been distributed to the Governing Board Members in advance for review. Modifications to the June 26, 2007, minutes were requested and approved. The minutes of the June 26, 2007, and July 10, 2007, meetings of the Governing Board were approved as amended.

REPORTS

1. Student Representative

Mr. Heller thanked the Board and Superintendent for allowing him to observe the Governing Board meetings over the summer. Mr. Heller stated that school is off to an excellent start and it has been a pleasure meeting new faculty. Mr. Heller is looking forward to a great year.

2. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Stratton updated the Governing Board on enrollment. Current enrollment is 4,092 compared to last year's enrollment at this time of 4,172. Kindergarten is still very small with the current class of 190, compared to the senior class of 400. The District continues to have large senior classes and small kindergarten classes.

3.3% of overall enrollment is comprised of people who are enrolled on employment related permits. Currently, 135 students are enrolled on employment-related permit.

Mr. Stratton updated the Governing Board on current class sizes. The class size average in kindergarten is 17, in grades 1 – 3 the average class size is 19. English in grade 9 is 19, algebra I and geometry class size is 19 and honors geometry is 20.

In terms of student performance, the district API is third in the state, the same as last year. The District is only 1 point behind the second in the state. 938 is the top API score in the state, 916 is second and we are 915. The Director of Assessment will come to the October meeting to report on API, SAT and AP test results.

We have a record number of students who took the 2007 AP tests. 1,099 students took AP tests and our pass rate continues to be in the 80th percentile.

3. President's Report

Mr. Tracy deferred his report.

4. Assistant Superintendent of Facilities and Operations Report

- a) Elementary Construction Update: Dr. Leininger provided a construction update on the elementary projects at Paradise Canyon Elementary and Palm Crest Elementary. The district is on track at DSA and anticipates a 4 month bin time. While that is happening Lundgren Management will provide a constructability report. Dr. Leininger anticipates going out to bid in January. Dr. Leininger and Mr. Stratton recently met with Best, Best and Kreiger and Lundgren Management and were able to reduce the construction management contract by \$133,000.

Mr. Peterson asked Dr. Leininger if he has approached community and staff in making sure they are getting what they want during construction. Dr. Leininger provided a history on his communication with staff, site committees, and the community.

- b) Oak Grove Restroom projects: Dr. Leininger provided information on the Oak Grove Restroom project. Dr. Leininger reported that a discussion regarding the addition of permanent restrooms and a dressing room at the Oak Grove athletic field took place at a Joint Use meeting some years ago. Recently the project came up again and Dr. Leininger was asked to get an accurate cost of the project. Dr. Leininger discussed the project with the Board. Modules are pre-approved by DSA. Dr. Leininger showed a diagram of the modular that is being considered. This project would provide permanent restrooms and would also provide a locker room for the girl's softball team. The total estimated cost for the project is \$155,183.

Since this project is not a part of approved projects for bond funding, funding is in question. Staff is asking for direction from the Governing Board to have the architect develop a package with the pre-approved drawings at a cost of approximately \$11,000. Staff is also asking for approval to approach the City through Joint Use to ask for funding assistance.

Mrs. Boyd discussed the current conditions at the high school campus and asked about Title 9 compliance.

Funding was discussed. Consensus was reached by the Governing Board to go ahead and fund the full \$11,000 for architectural drawing and to approach the City through Joint Use for assistance with the cost of the architectural fees.

- c) Foothill Median project: Dr. Leininger discussed the Foothill Median project while showing a drawing of the intent of the project. The main purpose of the project is to place a median from Hill Street east approximately one half of the way down the block. The median is there to prevent left hand turns from west bound traffic.

Dr. Leininger proceeded to discuss the impact to the district office and the maintenance office. Mr. Peterson stated that this has been agendaized to discuss at Joint Use. At Mr. Peterson's request, Dr. Leininger reported on the history of the project, how the project was noticed and whether businesses were contacted.

- d) LCHS Construction Update: Dr. Leininger provided an update on high school construction stating that not only did we reduce the cost of the bid but that also we saved \$400,000 – \$500,000 as a result of not having to go to portables. The students were in their classrooms the first day of school.

Dr. Leininger thanked Dr. Dragos for his work before the end of school in preparing rooms for the work. Dr. Leininger thanked teachers for their patience and willingness to make the moves.

Jeff Wang, a member of the La Canada Jr. Baseball Association, was in the audience and spoke regarding the Oak Grove Restroom project. Mr. Wang applauded the Governing Board for its leadership on this project and reported that Dr. Leininger has done a lot of solid work to move this project forward. Mr. Wang stated that the user groups are ready to contribute funds for this project.

5. Deputy Superintendent

Staffing: Dr. Loose reported to the Governing Board on the new certificated interview process, which has been implemented as part of best practice. Dr. Loose provided a staffing update by reporting that the district has hired 25 new certificated staff members, bringing the district to a total of 210 teachers. Dr. Loose reported that over the summer 38 classified staff members were also hired. Mr. Peterson asked for and received clarification on the interview process and background research prior to hiring new staff..

OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS BOARD

The following audience members addressed the Board:

None

PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS

1. First Reading

- a. **Approval of the 2006-2007 Unaudited Actuals, R22-07-08.** It was requested this item be presented for approval this evening. It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Dalbeck) to approve the 2006-2007 Unaudited Actuals, R22-07-08. Because the State budget was not signed until August 24, 2007, it didn't overlap

with the approval of the Unaudited Actuals. The Revised 2007-2008 Budget will be presented to the Governing Board on October 2, 2007. The Business Services Department has completed the year end closing process and the balance in each fund for 2006-2007 was presented. Dr. Loose reviewed the combined Unaudited Actuals.

Mrs. Wilcox asked that in the future an additional column be added to include the previous year budget in the report.

Mr. Peterson asked what the Other Local revenue was comprised of and asked for clarification on the 22% increase. Dr. Loose clarified that Other Local revenue includes: lease income, interest, donations including field trips, PTA, lab fees, and SELPA support funding.

The motion to approve the 2006-2007 Unaudited Actuals was adopted unanimously.

- b. ***Resolution 2-07-08 to adopt the Gann Limit Calculations.** It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Wilcox) to approve Resolution 2-07-08 to adopt the Gann Limit Calculations. This is a state constitutional requirement. The data provided for the Gann Limit Calculations is based on the Unaudited Actuals for 2006-07 and the projections for 2007-08. The motion to approve Resolution 2-07-08 to adopt the Gann Limit Calculations was adopted unanimously.

2. Second Reading

- a. **Board Policy Revision – Student Assessment, R8-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to approve Board Policy Revision – Student Assessment, R8-07-08. Mr. Tracy read a statement which provided a history of Governing Board discussions and actions on the Student Assessment board policy 6162.5 to date.

Mr. Stratton stated that at the last meeting the Governing Board directed staff to work with teachers to clarify the following three issues: defining any tests that by their nature would be outside of the umbrella language of the board policy; providing a distinction between tests and assessments; and clarifying the timeline for notification to parents on unreturned tests with student scores of C- or less.

Mr. Stratton and Ms. Sinnette met with approximately 15 teachers to assist in the Board Policy revision addressing these specific issues. The draft presented incorporates the feedback from those teachers. Mr. Stratton stated that the draft attempts to balance Board intent, with an exemption process that is manageable.

Mr. Stratton requested that the Governing Board adopt some version of this Board Policy so the district can move forward with addressing other educational issues. Mr. Stratton also stated that LCTA has requested that the effect of this policy on the terms and conditions of the teachers' employment be negotiated. Mr. Stratton stated that he supported the request and that it is appropriate as per Labor Code. He requested that the date of policy implementation be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Tracy and Mr. Stratton asked that the Governing Board review the changes prior to opening the discussion to further community input. Mrs. Wilcox said that she would prefer to hear from students, parents and teachers at this time and suggested a time limit of three minutes per speaker. The Governing Board decided

to listen to the students present wishing to address the Board on the Student Assessment policy and then review the policy revisions prior to additional community input.

The following students addressed the Governing Board regarding the Student Assessment policy:

Mimi Spindle – regarding returning of tests.
Hayley Herkert - regarding returning of tests.
Kelly Gregg – regarding Pinnacle on-line posting of grades
AJ Blumenfeld – regarding returning of tests

Hearing student input, the Governing Board reviewed the revisions presented by Mr. Stratton.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Wilcox) to accept the revisions in paragraph d. The motion to accept the revisions in paragraph d was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stratton reported on the revisions to paragraph f.

It was moved and seconded (Dalbeck /Boyd) to add the words “required to be” which modifies the sentence in paragraph f to read “diagnostic assessments by their nature are not “required to be” distributed to students and through them to parents for review.

Mrs. Wilcox made a motion to amend the sentence to read, diagnostic assessments, “(which are not part of the students grade).” The motion failed due to lack of a second.

The motion to modify the sentence in paragraph f to read “diagnostic assessments by their nature are not “required to be” distributed to students and through them to parents for review was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. Wilcox asked if there is a problem with studying to the release pool of the Advanced Placement tests. Mr. Stratton clarified that some released questions are widely available but that others are restricted to AP teachers.

It was moved and seconded (Wilcox/Boyd) to delete “the released pool of Advanced Placement multiple choice questions from the College Board” and add sentence that says “Sections of AP assessments that include College Board questions may not be required to be distributed to students and through them to their parents.”

It was suggested the amendment read “are not required”. The motion to delete “the released pool of Advanced Placement multiple choice questions from the College Board” and add a sentence that says “Sections of AP assessments that include College Board questions are not required to be distributed to students and through them to their parents” was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Wilcox/Peterson) to add: “The Board realizes that it is time-consuming to coordinate and rewrite formal summative assessments. However, the Board also has on-going concerns that giving the same assessment, period after period, year after year, ignores the possibility that the security of these assessments has been breached. In weighing the alternatives, the Board is

accepting the staff recommendation and is agreeing that quarterly anchor assessments and semester finals can be held in school without obtaining an exception from the principal. Parents may make appointments with the teacher or principal to review these assessments.” After conversation by the Governing Board, Mr. Peterson withdrew his amendment in favor of changing section h to address this concern.

Mr. Peterson made a motion to amend the statement to read, “However, in balancing workloads of creating tests yet addressing the goals of keeping assessments fresh, the governing board recognizes”

The motion to adopt the revisions as stated failed 1:4. Mr. Tracy, Mr. Peterson, Mrs. Boyd and Mrs. Dalbeck voted against the motion.

Mr. Stratton discussed the definition of “other assessments.”

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Boyd) to amend the current shaded language in section f to read “Assessment practices not defined as tests are portfolios, group work, collaborative projects, oral presentations, lab reports, class participation projects and arts performances.”

Mr. Stratton argued the impact of removing “essay” from the list. Mr. Tracy asked if Mr. Stratton’s concerns could be addressed in paragraph g.

The motion to amend the current shaded languages in section f to read “Assessment practices not defined as tests are portfolios, group work, collaborative projects, oral presentations, lab reports, class participation projects, oral presentations, lab reports, class participation responses and arts performances” was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. Wilcox expressed concern about portfolios of student homework, tests, and quizzes kept in the classroom if the portfolios were not required to be sent home through the exemption process. Mr. Peterson responded that the portfolios don’t have to go home because the individual items in the portfolios have already gone home and the teachers shouldn’t have to go through the cumbersome exemption process. Mr. Peterson, Mrs. Boyd and Mrs. Dalbeck all agreed that, unless an individual item has received an exemption, the individual items would have to be sent home first before being placed in a portfolio. Mr. Peterson said that the family can make copies and create a folder of student work at home. Mrs. Wilcox made a motion to delete the word “portfolios” from the list. The motion failed for lack of a second. Mr. Stratton summarized saying that we already have provisions for every item that might appear in a portfolio and it is a moot point.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Boyd) to add “triggering an exception” to paragraph f section 1). The motion failed with a 2:3 vote. Mr. Tracy, Mrs. Dalbeck, and Mrs. Boyd voted against the motion.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Boyd) to modify paragraph f section 2 by changing the word “required” to “requested”. The motion to change the word “required” to “requested” in paragraph f section 2 was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Boyd) to add “Prior to granting an exception” before paragraph f section #3. The motion to add “Prior to granting an exception” was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Dalbeck) to add "test" prior to "revisions" in paragraph f section 5. The motion to add "test" prior to "revisions" in paragraph f section 5 was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stratton reported on the revisions in paragraph f section 6.

It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to accept the revisions in paragraph f section 6 be accepted as presented. The motion to accept the revisions in paragraph f section 6 was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to approve paragraph g.

It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Wilcox) to amend the paragraph to include "and/or intellectual property" after copyrighted material. Mr. Tracy read the amended sentence, Copyrighted material and/or intellectual property that prohibits distribution to students and parents shall not be used by teachers in tests and other assessments. Mr. Tracy started a discussion on how this change might affect current practices. Mr. Stratton stated that this has been addressed in paragraph f section 1 and requested the opportunity to ask teachers the impact of this statement. Mr. Stratton stated he does not recommend approval of the shaded area. This was presented as an option at the request of the Governing Board not as a recommendation from the Superintendent.

After much discussion regarding copyrighted material and the impact of adding the above statement to the board policy, Mr. Tracy presented the vote to approve paragraph g. The motion to approve paragraph g as amended failed by a 1:4 vote. Mrs. Wilcox voted for the approval. With the motion failing, the shaded area was removed from paragraph g.

It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m. The motion to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m. was adopted unanimously.

A break was called at 10:40 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:45 p.m.

The conversation continued on paragraph g regarding essays. Mrs. Wilcox suggested language to clarify essay requirements, suggesting "An essay may be assigned before an earlier essay has been returned as long as the earlier essay is returned before the next one is collected."

The Governing Board discussed various options to modify the paragraph to obtain the Governing Board's goal in regard to essays.

It was moved and seconded (Dalbeck/Boyd) to modify the language in paragraph g by inserting the word "essays" after "tests" strike the word "specifically" and add the sentence "Teachers shall grade and review essays prior to the collection of the next similar type of essay."

Mr. Stratton suggested modifying language to paragraph g. After some discussion, Mrs. Dalbeck withdrew her motion. It was moved and seconded to accept Mr. Stratton's suggested language.

It was suggested paragraph g be revised to read "Tests, essays and other assessments shall be graded by teachers and reviewed by students and teachers in a

timely manner. Specifically, teachers shall grade and review essays prior to collecting the next similar essays. Teachers shall grade and review tests prior to administering the next similar test in an instructional sequence or the next cumulative test in which the learning will be again measured.”

The motion to accept the modification to paragraph g as suggested by Mr. Stratton was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. Boyd requested a definition of “periodically” in paragraph h. It was suggested changing “periodically” to “at least annually” and changing the word “tests” to “assessments”. Mrs. Sinnette reported on what a huge task this would be for the principals.

Site review of assessments was discussed. Mr. Peterson suggested language that would modify the paragraph to suggest a sample review of assessments. It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Tracy) to modify paragraph h as follows “Types and quantity of assessments shall be reviewed at least annually by teachers and administrators at each grade level or subject to ensure consistent coverage and measurement of course curriculum. To ensure that assessments properly align with the learning material covered, an annual applicable sample of assessments shall be reviewed.”

The Governing Board extensively discussed the motion and upon asking for the vote, the motion to approve the above motion was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Wilcox) to further amend paragraph h to insert a phrase at the beginning of the sentence to read, “In balancing the added work of creating new tests against the concerns associated with repeatedly giving identical assessments, types and quantities of assessments shall be reviewed.” The motion to adopt the motion failed with a 2:3 vote. Mrs. Dalbeck, Mr. Tracy and Mrs. Boyd voted against the motion.

Mrs. Boyd made a motion to modify paragraph i to delete “It is the Governing Board’s intent that” beginning the sentence with “Teachers shall utilize.” Mr. Stratton stated that this is a contract issue and that any modification would be subject to negotiation. Mrs. Boyd withdrew her motion.

It was moved (Peterson/Dalbeck) to extend the meeting to midnight. The motion to extend the meeting to midnight was adopted unanimously.

It was moved and seconded (Peterson/Boyd) to approve Board Policy 6162.5 as amended not to go into affect for 30 business days from today to allow for time to formally meet with LCTA. The motion to adopt Board Policy 6162.5 as amended not to go into affect for 30 business days from today was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. Wilcox said that she would like to have the administrative regulation for the assessment policy brought to the Governing Board as a report. She asked if other board members concurred. Mr. Tracy announced that the request to have the administrative regulation brought to the Governing Board as a report was now Board direction.

3. Consent Agenda

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

- a. **Personnel Report, P2-03-04.** The Board approved the following Personnel Items:
Classified: New Hires: Laura Lee Bartholomew, Amy Bullard, Heather Carlson, Robert Cote, Casey Kazlauskas, Robert Lane, Joseph Mearig, Nicole Taccariello. Resignation: Amy Bullard. *Classified:* New Hires: Ayrpi Melikian, Nancy Tinkham, Ruby McCullen, Dina Loftus, Kathleen Boss, Jane Lee, Carol Bridgewood, Sharon McAleenan, Crissa Cruz, Linda Hada, Evelyn Park, Georgie McAdams, Joy Durkee, Beth Mumper, Joy Benvenuti. Modification: Marie Harbabikian, Esther Yu, Theresa Pisacane.
- b. **Approval of new lease for copier equipment at LCHS, R24-07-08.** The Board approved entering into a contract with Xerox for copier equipment at the high school.
- c. **Approval of Contract with LACOE for Regional Occupational Program, R23-07-08.** The Board approved entering into a contract with Los Angeles County Office of education for the Regional Occupational Program.
- d. **Approval of Contract with LACOE for Outdoor Education Programs, R20-07-08.** The Board approved entering into a contract with the Los Angeles County Office of Education for the Outdoor Education Programs.
- e. **Request to Accept Bid for Elementary Lockdown Hardware, R25-07-08.** The Board accepted the bid from EJ Enterprises in the amount of \$337,870 for the elementary lockdown hardware.
- f. **Request to go to Bid for LCHS Lockdown Hardware, R26-07-08.** The Board approved going to bid for the La Cañada High School lockdown hardware.
- g. **Surplus of Computer equipment, R28-07-08.** The Board approved the surplus of ROP computer equipment as listed.
- h. **Surplus of Maintenance Vehicle, R29-07-08.** The Board approved the surplus of a maintenance van.
- i. **Gifts to District, R27-03-04.** The Board approved the Gifts to the District as presented.
- j. **Purchase Order List #3.** The Board approved Purchase Order List #3.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Governing Board requested site visits for the fall.

Mrs. Wilcox reported that as part of Red Ribbon Week, Will Moffitt would like to address the Board on the team summit report at the October 23 Board meeting. Mrs. Stratton recommended this be a report from Ms. Davidson with the assistance of Mr. Moffitt.

Mrs. Wilcox asked for clarification on the posting of the Board meeting audio links on the web. It is her understanding the audio is to be available for 30 days or until the minutes are approved whichever is longer.

Mrs. Boyd reminded the Board the need to agendize a decision on the old district office property.

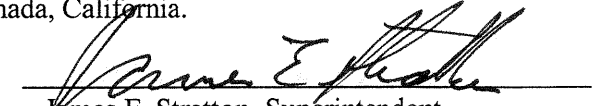
Mrs. Wilcox asked for a discussion in agenda planning on the budget. It was suggested Dr. Loose put budget assumptions in TWIR prior to Board delivery.

Mr. Tracy reported that he received an invitation to speak at a 9/11 presentation at the high school. Mr. Tracy attended this morning and was really impressed that this was a student initiated event.

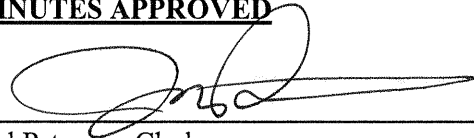
The CTA dinner is scheduled for December 3, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 p.m. The Next Regular Meeting of the Governing Board will be held on Tuesday, October 2, 2007, 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


Joel Peterson, Clerk

11/13/07
Date