

# BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes, Special Meeting  
April 26, 2006  
District Administrative Offices  
2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
Berkeley, CA 94704-1180

ADOPTED MINUTES

## ROLL CALL

### MEMBERS PRESENT

President Terry S. Doran  
Vice President Joaquin Rivera  
Director John T. Selawsky  
Director Shirley Issel  
Director Nancy Riddle  
Student Director Teal Miller

Administration: Superintendent Michele Lawrence, Secretary

Prior to Closed Session, as necessary, staff/employee comments are taken per Government Code Section 54957. No one addressed the Board at this time.

Recess to Closed Session (Government Code Sections 3549.1(d), 54956.9(a) and 54957 and Education Code Section 49819(c))

- a. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation
- b. Consideration of Student Expulsion
- c. Collective Bargaining
- d. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release
- e. Public Employment Appointment
- f. Liability Claims
- g. Property Acquisition

**President Doran called the meeting to order at 7: 42 p.m.**

### Report on Closed Session Actions:

The Board addressed the following student expulsion matters:

**Student Case No. 0506-34-070991** and voted 3 to 2 with Directors Doran and Rivera voting no for suspended expulsion and transfer to Berkeley Alternative High School

**Student Case No. 0506-35-021189** and voted 3 to 2 with Directors Doran and Rivera voting no to amend an order of expulsion to a suspended expulsion and transfer

**Student Case No. 0506-32-091189** and voted unanimously on voice vote to expel student

No other action was taken in closed session

## **Approve Agenda of April 26, 2006**

President Doran suggested that a Public Comment opportunity be included in the regular place in the agenda for members of the community who wanted to address the Board on issues other than the proposed tax measure.

**Selawsky/Riddle** and approved unanimously on voice vote

## **Public Comment**

One member of the community addressed the Board

## **Reports**

Director John Selawsky announced that he will be holding a Community Meeting on Tuesday, May 2 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 at the Main Branch of the Berkeley Public Library

President Terry S. Doran shared that BUSD and the City participated in a forum on teen violence, adding it was effective and very well attended. He thanked all BUSD staff who participated.

## **INFORMATION ITEM**

### **Item 1.1-I – Presentation by Superintendent Lawrence on Proposed New Tax Measure**

A lengthy discussion ensued kicked off by Superintendent Lawrence who discussed the staff recommendation for this item. It includes some adjustments, but no increase is currently being asked of taxpayers, with the exception of COLA.

She shared how much hard work had gone into maintaining the integrity of the existing program while making some adjustments to how dollars are spent. Support for middle school counseling services, an increase in teacher staff development and allocation for data collection and analysis. Accountability, overseen by the BSEP P&O and the Audit Committee, remains in place.

Director Selawsky asked for clarification on the Superintendent's recommendation of what appears to be a reduction in both music and library programs. The Superintendent emphasized that there will not be a change in the programs, just a reduction in the amount of instructional materials. Selawsky had another question about the removal of Fund 7 (Facilities). Ms. Lawrence explained that those dollars have been redistributed to staff development, data collection and other areas.

President Doran asked that the Board hold further discussion until after they have heard from the public.

**Rivera/Riddle** and unanimously approved on voice vote

## **Public Hearing**

The Board heard from 14 members of the public. Six individuals spoke in favor of support for BUSD libraries and suggested that it might be prudent to go out for more money. Three speakers addressed the Board and voiced their support in favor of music and art programs and recommended that the Board increase the size of the measure. One speaker asked the Board to be more "bold" in the

new measure with an eye toward looking for dollars that may be needed in the upcoming years. One speaker specifically asked for no increase and advised the Board against using scare tactics like threats of cutting music and library programs. This information was reported in the *Daily Planet*. The PTA Council indicated its support for a new tax measure.

**Rivera/Selawsky** and approved unanimously on voice vote to close Public Hearing

President Doran advised Board members that it has been requested that another public hearing be convened after completion of the draft. He pointed out that specifically detailed text for the measure will be presented at the May 24 meeting, and will be up for a vote.

Superintendent Lawrence spent time discussing her reasons for keeping the recommendation at the same level. In her view, knowing the uncertainty of the state's economy and not knowing the tax threshold of the community, she made the decision to take a measured approach. She also addressed the remark that the district is employing scare tactics by threatening music and library program cuts. These are not scare tactics: if the measure fails to pass, the District cannot make up the difference to provide for these programs.

In her view, the addition of teacher training and staff development is significant. Instruction does not improve unless teachers have the opportunity and time to study their art, and learn new information. She maintains it is foolish for any school system to not include program evaluation and data collection. Our district must invest more time in collecting and evaluating data while developing instruments to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs.

Director Selawsky uttered his support for middle school counselors. He also toyed with class size, saying he does not see how the district would suffer by raising the numbers at the high school level to 29:1. He supports an incremental increase in the site enrichment funds; it encourages site participation and site involvement. He would also like to see our libraries receive a slight increase. He suggests dollars to increase the visual and performing arts could come from the class size figures he mentioned.

Director Riddle would like to see more transparency overall. In her words, she does not like the cake; she likes a pie where you can see all the pieces. She would also like to see the underlying worksheets to better see where everything is going. She suggested the Board go back to the BSEP handbook and look at the bylaws, the section on site committees and their annual plans, and the criteria that have been developed on what qualifies.

There was further exchange around school governance councils and various other areas of concern.

### **Public announcements**

### **Meeting Adjournment:**

President Doran adjourned the meeting at 10:54 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

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Terry S. Doran, President  
Board of Education

**ATTEST:**

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Michele Lawrence, Secretary  
Board of Education