

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes, Regular Meeting
September 20, 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 Mateo Aceves

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:

No action taken

Approve Agenda of September 20, 2006

Selawsky/Riddle and approved unanimously as amended on voice vote
Vice President Rivera requested Item 1.1-C be pulled for editing

Teaching and Learning Presentation

Jim Slep, Principal, BHS School along with Alejandro Ramos, BHS Dean, and two teachers presented the Board with an overview of Life Academy. One of the WASC goals was a plan to ensure that all students can achieve success and go to college. The target population is students who were unsuccessful before entering high school. The Life Academy is not a small school but rather a

program for 9th graders who might benefit from a different kind of program. The staff introduced students and parents from the Academy who shared some of the positive experiences they have had at the Academy. One significant outcome was that 9th graders at the Academy's average attendance and GPA rate has significantly improved.

Public Testimony

None

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Lawrence remarked that she recently spoke to the Rotarians who have adopted a high school in New Orleans and are in the process of rehabbing the site, and she expressed her admiration for their efforts. They are donating books to the school in her name. She also thanked the administrators who gave up their Sunday to attend the "How Berkeley Can You Be" parade.

Board Members' Reports

Student Director Mateo Aceves announced that the first week of school went well. He has set up bi-weekly meetings with Principal Slep to address student issues.

Director Nancy Riddle attended middle school back to school night last week. She was pleased to see how well King Middle school looks and how happy she was to see so many parents in attendance. She also attended a BOCA event on Sunday in honor of Father Bill.

Director John Selawsky had nothing to report.

Director Shirley Issel had nothing to report.

Vice President Joaquin Rivera had nothing to report.

President Terry Doran visited Longfellow's back to school night and commented that the school is one of the best kept secrets in the District. He announced that the meeting scheduled for October 5 to discuss Derby Street plans has been delayed.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Selawsky/Rivera and approved unanimously on voice vote

Item 1.1-C – Resolution in Support of Proposition 89

Vice President Rivera requested that the Resolution be changed to read as follows: under" NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Berkeley Board of Education supports Proposition 89 in the November 7, 2006 election."

Rivera/Issel and approved as amended; Student Director Aceves abstained

ACTION ITEMS

Item 2.1-A Request for New Position

Selawsky/Issel and approved unanimously on voice vote

Item 4.1-A – Reorganization of Nutrition Services Department

Vice President Rivera had concerns about this item: the finances were unclear to him; he does not know what five positions have been eliminated; he was unclear about the salaries for each position; and, how the \$187K increase was derived. He also pointed out that the recently approved cafeteria fund budget shows an encroachment on the general fund. Director Riddle also remarked that the finances were not clear.

Ann Cooper, Director of Nutrition Services, explained how the salary calculations were derived: Five food service positions were not filled last year; there was an increase in revenue from different sources: reimbursables, state funding and participation. Additionally, meal prices were raised. Before Tina Brier left the District, she and Ann carefully ascertained the dollar value for the sous chef positions based on what the Merit Commission might approve.

Superintendent Lawrence countered that the Board certainly has the choice of not putting any money into nutrition services but if we are going to provide quality food for our students, there is a need for the District to sustain the program and recognize that the reimbursements from the State are not enough to provide the quality of food our parents desire. She further stated that this request is within the approved budget and is not an increase to this fund.

Director Selawsky does not believe that all the positions will come in at the lowest salary level, stating that this is not entirely a financial argument; it needs to be operationally sound as well.

Director Shirley Issel thanked Ms. Cooper for being at the Board meeting so late in the evening. She noted that we have all worked hard to improve our food services and she thought the plan presented tonight was well thought out and persuasive. She reiterated aspects detailed in the plan such as how it collapses unfilled positions for savings but does not eliminate any existing positions. It also corrects the practice of using substitutes thereby providing benefits to employees as well as providing a ladder for advancement.

President Doran is excited about the plan and said even if it meant putting in more money he is convinced that improving nutrition is a necessary vital expenditure. He added that this item makes sense and it is logical.

Director Riddle stated that the addition of any new position in our district requires more information than was contained in the item.

An amendment was proposed that approval is made with a caveat that a spreadsheet will be forthcoming.

Selawsky/Issel and approved on voice vote with Vice President Rivera voting NO.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Item 3.1-I B-Tech Academy

Principal, Victor Diaz, was on hand to discuss the focus of B-Tech Academy. He presented a PowerPoint presentation that was clear and concise and

expanded on the theme: relationships, rigor and relevance. Some highlights of the presentation was the decrease in suspensions and expulsions; the community activities in which students are engaged; the success of the gender based studies; the diversity of the teaching staff which is representative of the student population; and, the college planning committee moving students toward the possibility of attending college. Mr. Diaz also discussed what lies ahead saying that physical education programs are needed, an increase in parental involvement, greater vocational education opportunities and additional funding streams.

Vice President Rivera expressed his pleasure at hearing this report and the enthusiasm displayed. The police department has reported a significant improvement at B-Tech in terms of violence. Director Selawsky commended Diaz on his presentation. Student Director Aceves expressed hope that funding will become available for enrichment programs. Director Issel thanked Mr. Diaz and expressed her excitement about the positions. She asked that the Board be included on the list of invites to community celebrations. President Doran thanked everyone for their hard work and commented that the relationship with the high school has moved toward one of collaboration and positive exchange.

Item 3.2-I – Adult School Benchmarks

Vice President Rivera requested a more comprehensive breakdown of trends. Assistant Superintendent Smith filled in some of the blanks and assured the board that future reports would contain more explanation.

Item 3.3-I – Enrollment Report

Director Issel noted that our enrollment is 175 below projection and questioned how this would impact our budget and what can we do to adjust our expenditures. Deputy Superintendent Smith replied that that we are only looking at ten day’s enrollment benchmark not the CBEDS comparison that encompasses a three-week summary. He added that the effect of lowered enrollment will affect next year’s budget, not this year’s since we are funded on prior year ADA is current year is lower. Director Riddle suggested that we do have an opportunity to cut expenses and make adjustments in this budget year, rather than waiting for next year.

Item 4.1-I – Facilities Plan Update

Received for information

Item 4.2-I – Facilities Construction Plan

Received for information

Item 4.3-I – Accessibility Report

Received for information

Item 4.4-I – Measure BB Report

Received for information

ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEMS

Director Issel requested that the minutes from 09-06-06 and 09-13-06 be tabled until the next Board meeting.

Public announcements

None

Meeting Adjournment

President Doran adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm

ATTEST:

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Terry S. Doran, President
Board of Education

Michele Lawrence, Secretary
Board of Education