

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SARATOGA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting
November 14, 2006**

M I N U T E S

Present: Cindy Ruby, Cathie Thermond, Shinku Sharma, Michael Gipe, John Poo

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:52 p.m. by Board President Cindy Ruby. The public was given the opportunity to make community comments on any item on the closed session agenda.

Saratoga Classified Association representative Bill Eagen commented on behalf of a classified employee being considered for dismissal.

2. Adjourn to Closed Session

Board President Cindy Ruby adjourned the meeting to Closed Session at 6:05 p.m.

3. Closed Session

Board members met in Closed Session for:

- 3.1 Personnel Report
- 3.2 Public Classified Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release
- 3.3 Conference with Labor Negotiator Lane Weiss

4. Open Session

Board President Cindy Ruby called the meeting into Open Session at 6:51 p.m. and announced action taken in Closed Session.

A motion was made by Michael Gipe and seconded by Cindy Ruby to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to dismiss a classified employee.

AYES: Ruby, Gipe, Poo

NOES: Sharma, Thermond

A motion was made by Cathie Thermond and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Personnel Report and Personnel Report Addendum.

AYES: Ruby, Sharma, Thermond, Gipe, Poo

NOES: 0

Personnel Report

New Hires

Gayathri Chakravarthy is being recommended for the RSP Aide position at Argonaut Elementary School effective November 20, 2006.

Deborah Dallas is being recommended for the 1 on 1 Aide position at Redwood Middle School effective November 13, 2006.

New Hires (continued)

Libby Graham is being recommended for the RSP Aide position at Redwood Middle School effective November 6, 2006.

Jennifer Li is being recommended for the SDC Aide position at Foothill Elementary School effective November 27, 2006.

Request for Leave of Absence

Christine DeCaporale, 7th Grade Core Teacher at Redwood Middle School is requesting a maternity leave of absence effective December 4, 2006 to March 15, 2007.

Juliana Orlando, 4th Grade Teacher at Foothill Elementary School is requesting a maternity leave of absence effective January 3, 2007 to April 16, 2007.

Resignation

Stacey Basso, SCD Aide at Foothill Elementary School is resigning effective November 10, 2006.

Sebastien Nicolas, RSP Aide at Redwood Middle School is resigning effective November 3, 2006

Personnel Report Addendum

New Hires

Janette Fong is being recommended for the Noon Duty position at Argonaut Elementary School effective November 20, 2006.

Thuan Hoang is being recommended for the 1 on 1 Aide position at Foothill Elementary School effective November 15, 2006.

5. Action/Consent Items

- 4.1 Approval of Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes for October 26, 2006
- 4.3 Approval of Warrants for October 2006

A motion was made by Cathie Thermond and seconded by Michael Gipe to approve the Action/Consent Items.

AYES: Ruby, Sharma, Thermond, Gipe, Poo
NOES: 0

6. Communications

5.1 Community Comments

- There were no comments from the community.

5.2 Comments from Employee Groups

- There were no comments from employee groups.

5.3 Comments from the Superintendent

- There were no comments from the Superintendent.

5.4 Comments from the Board

- There were no comments from the Board.

7. Action/Report Items

7.1 Redwood Middle School – 8th Grade Math

Saratoga Union School District and Redwood Middle School staff presented an overview of 8th grade math requirements, the Redwood Middle School 8th grade math program, and an action plan to provide increased access to a full year course of Algebra I for the 2006-07 school year.

Board President Cindy Ruby outlined the structure for discussion:

- Superintendent Lane Weiss and Redwood Middle School Principal Beth Polito will give a 15 minute presentation.
- Board members will be given an opportunity to ask questions.
- Community members will be invited to comment and ask questions. Due to the large audience comments will be limited to three minutes.
- Board members will discuss what was heard from staff and community.
- All were asked to be as respectful as possible in light of Saratoga Union School District Goal Number 1 - Organizational Culture: Promote a district culture of mutual respect, integrity, and equity.

Superintendent Weiss thanked Board members, staff and community members for attending this meeting to participate in this process. He also thanked staff, teachers, parents, and board members for their attendance and participation in meetings regarding mathematics education prior to tonight's meeting over the last several weeks. There has been much research, education, communication and care shown for our students.

The State of California Math Framework provides direction to public schools:

- Legislation enacted in 2000 requires students to complete Algebra I as a condition of receiving a high school diploma.
- A goal of the framework goal is prepare all students to study Algebra by the eighth grade.
- There is flexibility in how to offer the program – one or more years may be used to deliver the program.
- Our goal is to support students reaching their highest potential.

Questions/Issues:

- How do we offer more access to a full year of Algebra I to 8th graders this school year?
- Beth Polito will share a plan that has been developed with staff and a group of parents.
- After discussion a budgetary request for support of this plan will be requested.

Redwood Principal Beth Polito presented the following information:

- 8th grade Math Current Practice
- Proposed Plan: Expanded Criteria, Student Support, Teacher Support
- Curriculum Map for 8A/8C classes (draft)
- Placement and Progress in Mathematics and 8th grade Math Placement Rubric

The current structure offers all students in Grade 8 Algebra I or Geometry Standards-based curriculum. Students placed in 8A (abstract) complete the Dolciani Algebra I text and students placed in 8C (concrete) utilize both Algebra I Dolciani text and

College Preparatory Mathematics Algebra as supplemental texts and will be placed in Algebra I in 9th Grade. This information, along with placement criteria, is provided with the student's schedule packet when the school year starts.

Differences between 8A and 8C have been outlined in the curriculum map and include differences in content, pacing and instructional strategies. Math teachers will recommend reassignment of students after the first 6 weeks of school or after the first semester when they have accumulated evidence that a re-assignment would benefit the student.

Proposal includes expanding criteria for math placement in the areas of classroom performance, assessments (California Standards Test in Math and Mathematics Assessment Resource Service), and other subjective criteria as noted in the hand out.

Based on past experience and data there are concerns students may not be successful. In order to implement this proposal we need to move soon to allow for the best possible transition and to provide support to students and the math department.

Board Discussion and Questions with Principal Polito:

- 8A and 8C provide for students developmentally. Staff has looked at placements conservatively not wanting to move students back. Now is the time to expand the criteria.
- Some data is subjective – is there one distribution or two different populations? Principal Polito stated there is a continuum. Some students have been teetering on transition.
- How successful will we be trying to do this so quickly? The gap is getting closer with only one chapter difference and the pace will pick up quite a bit in the second semester to maintain integrity of Algebra I program.
- We do not want to put students in a situation where they would fail and discourage them about math. We must think very seriously about adding a support structure for these students and parents.
- Would these students have a different way of learning? Pacing would be the biggest change.
- Would one section of full year Algebra I be enough? Approximately 50 students have been identified as meeting the expanded criteria. Possibly two small classes could be offered for more support.

Public Comments:

Mimi Mather spoke on behalf of a group of parents including Jan Smith, Tracy Nobles, and Suzanne Sullivan who participated in meetings with parents, staff and administration.

- Appreciated good discussions in working with staff and thanked both Superintendent Weiss and Principal Polito for putting forth this plan.
- All want the best experience for our children and to support a rigorous and comprehensive program.
- Middle school math really matters as this preparation lays the foundation for college.
- Philosophically believe in open access and a full year of Algebra I for all.
 1. Majority of students are capable.
 2. Support Differentiation
 3. Every student wins with more opportunities.
 4. Other middle schools provide access to a full year of Algebra I and score Advanced or Proficient.
 5. Support GATE approach and a variety of learning styles

- Asked the Board to support the proposal with as much expanded criteria as can be executed.

Suzanne Sullivan added her appreciation to Board members, Superintendent Weiss, Principal Polito and teachers.

- This takes a global perspective and many articles have been written on this hotly debated topic in the country.
- Asked board for their support and resources to allow open access and Algebra I for all.
- Students will benefit and hopes the implementation of this plan will not leave any students behind.
- Consider establishment of an ongoing District Math Council, an integrated K-12 curriculum map and a communication plan.

Other parents who spoke in support of Algebra I for all included: Wendy Chang, Anna Sturge, Linda Mighdoll, David Mather, Dan Fraisl, Anne Marie Paranzino, Wayne Nobles, Maria Guerra, David Mighdoll, Dory Albert and Anne Walsh.

Teachers who spoke in support of the Redwood Middle School Math Department included Josh Marks and Harry Dill.

Board Discussion:

Cathie Thermond spoke in support of this plan to give students a chance and is happy to see the focus for this year is on math. We will do the best we can to provide students access to be successful – student who do not complete Algebra I will still be good kids.

Michael Gipe added that it is ok to repeat Algebra I in high school and that some students may need a stronger foundation. We need to have a path that supports our children as they move through high school. Articulation with the high school is very important.

John Poo commented on great things coming out of this discussion of active engagement and articulation with the high school. He believes in challenging curriculum and course work for our students.

Shinku Sharma spoke on the importance of children being motivated and challenged to reach for a higher level. There is a need to recognize that there is not one fit for every student and to recognize different learning styles. She asked if an 8B class would be an option. She would like to address as many kids as possible, K-8.

Cindy Ruby commented that it was a privilege to work with Superintendent Weiss, Redwood staff and parents in doing what is best for kids. She appreciated parents working to diffuse emotion and thanked them for keeping focused on the issues. She is very supportive of the plan. It is very important to have a good foundation in Algebra and we must be careful not to consider it a failure if students do not take Algebra in middle school.

Michael Gipe thanked all the parents who put time and effort bringing this to the attention of the Board. We have very progressive, talented math teachers, a great staff and the opportunity to move on to the next step. We need to provide more differentiation and an ongoing Math Council would bring together math teachers, administration and parents. He strongly supports this proposal.

Asked what the drawbacks to having full access to the Algebra program, Mardi Kambish, Redwood Middle School Math Department Chair, said the concern would be about developmental readiness for some students.

A motion was made by Cathie Thermond and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Superintendent's recommendation and request to fund a 1.0 FTE not to exceed \$45,000, for the second semester of the 2006-07 school year to provide teacher and student support for Redwood Middle School 8th grade math.

AYES: Ruby, Sharma, Thermond, Gipe, Poo
NOES: 0

Board President Cindy Ruby thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

6.2 Budget Update – SUSD Budget Reserve Policy

Superintendent Lane Weiss updated the board on policy language he is researching for the working draft of a budget reserve policy. He is in contact with School Services of California and will provide additional information at upcoming board meetings.

6.3 Request to Authorize Bid Process and Expenditure – Redwood Middle School Cafeteria tables and benches

Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton requested the Board of Trustees authorize the administration to go to bid for new cafeteria tables, benches and pockets for Redwood Middle School and award the bid contingent upon the amount being within budget. She reviewed the bid process and informed the board that funding for the \$80,000 project would come from construction funds.

A motion was made by Cathie Thermond and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the request to go to bid for new cafeteria tables, benches and pockets for Redwood Middle School and award the bid contingent upon the amount being within budget.

AYES: Ruby, Sharma, Thermond, Gipe, Poo
NOES: 0

6.4 Facilities Use and Planning

Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton updated the board with a summary of facility use fees collected from the Los Gatos-Saratoga Community Education and Recreation Department. The board discussed the possibility of fee changes. We must balance community access with the needs of our students. Fees are collected to help offset wear and tear of facilities and fields. Superintendent Weiss recommended this item be placed on the agenda for action at the next meeting.

A summary of available construction funds and an overview of future construction projects was also presented. Superintendent Weiss will meet with district staff and principals to review current site needs, existing plans for Argonaut and Foothill Schools, study demographics, and develop a timeline.

6.5 Resolution 315.11/06 – Annual Accounting for Developers' Fees

Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton presented Resolution 315.11/06 – Annual Accounting of Developer Fees for 2005-06 Fiscal Year in the Following Fund: Fund 250- Developer's Fees, the Developers' Fee expenditure report for 2005-2006 and requested the Board's approval. A study is in progress with the Los

Gatos-Saratoga Joint Union High School District and will be completed in January 2007.

A motion was made by Cathie Thermond and seconded by John Poo to approve Resolution 315.11/06 – Annual Accounting of Developer Fees for 2005-06 Fiscal Year in the Following Fund: Fund 250- Developer’s Fees, the Developers’ Fee expenditure report for 2005-06

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Ruby, Sharma, Thermond, Gipe, Poo

NOES: 0

6.6 Second Reading – Board Policy Draft – (Series 1000) Community Relations

Superintendent Lane Weiss continued his presentation of a draft of the Series 1000 Board Policies – Community Relations for second reading to the board of trustees. The policy sub-committee has reviewed these policies and CSBA has provided the board with this copy for review and adoption. Third and Final Reading will be presented November 28, 2006 when the board will be asked to approve Series 1000 Board Policies – Community Relations.

6.7 Call for Nominations for California School Boards Association (CSBA) Delegate Assembly

Board members discussed interest in being nominated for the CSBA Delegate Assembly. There was no interest in being nominated at this time.

6.8 Report on the Santa Clara County School District Organization Official Ballot

Board member Cindy Ruby reported on the Santa Clara County School District Organization Official Ballot. The Board will take action on this at the next meeting.

7. Communications

7.1 Community Comments

- Board President Cindy Ruby announced the California School Boards Association is sponsoring a Masters in Governance program which will be offered in Santa Clara County. Superintendent Weiss will research the timeframe for registration.

8. Future Agenda Items:

The Board discussed items for future agendas:

Facility Use Fees

Santa Clara County School District Organization Official Ballot

Approval of Board Policies 1000s Community Relations

Next meeting: November 28, 2006

Redwood Middle School Library

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Clerk of the Board