



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SARATOGA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting
April 24, 2007**

M I N U T E S

Present: Michael Gipe, Cindy Ruby, Pragati Grover, Jack Chang, Shinku Sharma

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Michael Gipe. The public was given the opportunity to make community comments on any item on the closed session agenda.

There were no comments from the community.

2. Closed Session

Board members met in Closed Session for:

- 2.1 Personnel Report
- 2.2 Classified and Certificated Negotiations: Conference with Labor Negotiator Lane Weiss
- 2.3 Superintendent Contract Discussion/Negotiations

3. Open Session

Board President Michael Gipe called the meeting into Open Session and announced action taken in Closed Session and that the board would return to Closed Session at the end of the meeting.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Cindy Ruby to approve requests from the Personnel Report and Personnel Report Addendum.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Personnel Report

New Hire

Mayra Salgado is being recommended for the Child Nutrition position at Foothill School effective April 2, 2007.

Leave of Absence

Teri Brandt, Administrative Assistant at Redwood Middle School, is requesting a medical leave of absence effective April 16th to May 17th, 2007.

Anmari Koltchev, Health Clerk at Redwood Middle school is request a leave of absence for the 2007-2008 school year.

Dawn Yoshinaga, School Psychologist is requesting a maternity leave effective April 3, 2007 through the remainder of the 2006-2007 school year.

Resignation

Kristen Barrett, 60% Teacher at Foothill Elementary School is resigning effective June 15, 2007.

Malavi Murthy, 60% School Psychologist is resigning effective June 15, 2007.

Personnel Report Addendum

Appointment

Beth Polito is being recommended for the position of Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services effective July 1, 2007. Beth joined SUSD in 1994 as a 6th grade Core Teacher and is currently the Principal at Redwood Middle School.

Retirement

Connie Clancy, Kindergarten Teacher at Argonaut Elementary School is retiring effective September 1, 2007. Connie has been with SUSD for 16 years.

Martie Connor, First Grade Teacher at Foothill Elementary School is retiring effective June 16, 2007. Martie has been with SUSD for 38 years.

Superintendent Weiss announced the board voted 5/0 to appoint Beth Polito as Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services for the Saratoga Union School District. Board President Michael Gipe added that Beth Polito had been selected from 17 applicants and has the support of her peers and the review committee for this position.

Beth Polito expressed her appreciation to Superintendent Weiss and the Board of Trustees for their support.

4. Action/Consent Items

- 4.1 Approval of Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes for March 13, 2007
- 4.3 Approval of Warrants for March 2007
- 4.4 Approval of Declaration of Surplus Property

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Action/Consent Items.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

5. Communications

5.1 Community Comments

- Peggy Johnston spoke to the board regarding Redwood Middle School math curriculum and distributed a packet of information. She expressed concern about the curriculum approval process and student placement. She requested an orientation for parents on how to help their children and that there be an option for parents to choose between traditional or new math. Quyen Lam yielded her time to Mrs. Johnston.
- Stayton Chock spoke in support of Peggy Johnston’s remarks. He is a member of the Math Advisory Committee and requested the board review and approve the math program at Redwood Middle School and look closely at approving tenure for teachers.

- Dory Albert, also a member of the Math Advisory Committee, requested that the board not take action on Item 7.4, Noyce Foundation Grant Request until after a report from the Math Advisory Committee has been given.

5.2 Comments from Employee Groups

- There were no comments from employee groups.

5.3 Comments from the Superintendent

- Superintendent Weiss reported the Major Grant Proposal to the Saratoga Education Foundation was presented and is a continuation of current programs with a request to expand K-5 counseling, support for libraries, and an early intervention program for literacy.
- Superintendent Weiss read a letter from Santa Clara County Office of Education Superintendent Colleen Wilcox congratulating participants from SUSD in the Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championship, Santa Clara County's Science and Engineering Fair. The students' creativity and commitment to excellence were recognized by the judges in many categories. Redwood Middle School science teacher Gail Inlow was recognized for her outstanding work. Students recognized for their success were Priyanka Arunkumar, Serena Chan, Daryl Chang, David Chang, Jennifer Chiang, Walter Hsiang Nikhila Janakiram, Sarah Lensch, Shriya Nagpal, Simrath Ratra, Aaron Rhee, Karthik Sreedhara, Kerti Shukla, Caroline White and David Zarrin.

5.4 Comments from the Board

- Shinku Sharma reported being contacted by parents from Redwood Middle School regarding French I not being offered at Saratoga High School next year. She would like to see continuity in program offerings, transition and partnership as well as communications with parents taking place as early as possible.
- Michael Gipe reported San Jose State University is holding a 150th anniversary celebration on May 4th – all are invited to attend.

6. **Spotlight- Redwood Middle School Musical, *The Wiz***

Redwood Middle School students performed a scene from the upcoming musical production of *The Wiz*. Performances are scheduled for April 26-29, 2007 and tickets are available by calling (408) 741-5032 or at thewiztix@comcast.net. Parent volunteer Yvonne Harder introduced cast members Hannah Harder, Jay Lee, and Rex Sakamoto who performed excerpts from *Ease on Down* and *Be a Lion*.

7. **Action/Report Items**

7.1 **Ratification of 2006-2007 Tentative Agreement on Compensation between the Saratoga Classified Association and the Saratoga Union School District**

The Saratoga Classified Association and the Saratoga Union School District have tentatively reached agreement on compensation for 2006-07. Superintendent Weiss read the agreement aloud and the board was asked to ratify the agreement.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Jack Chang to approve the 2006-2007 Tentative Agreement on compensation between the Saratoga Classified Association and the Saratoga Union School District

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.2 **Facilities Use Policy**

A district sub-committee, including board members Jack Chang, Shinku Sharma and Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton, was formed to discuss methods of responding to community input received at the last board meeting on facility fees assessed to user groups in SUSD. The sub-committee reported progress on the development of a compromise which will be fair to the community as well as recovering a portion of costs associated with building/field usage. After feedback from Group II users has been reviewed, the board will be asked to vote on possible modifications at the next board meeting.

7.3 **Redwood Middle School: Study of the Instructional Day**

Superintendent Lane Weiss requested direction from the board on the study and scheduling of a workshop to discuss factors to be considered in response to Redwood Middle School staff input regarding possible changes to the instructional day at Redwood Middle School for the 2008-2009 school year. Discussion included the following:

- Clarify information needed to develop a timeline for proposed instructional day structure
- Schedule a board workshop in May and publicize to staff and parents
- Access information from the Saratoga High School online survey regarding their block schedule
- Invite a high school representative to attend the workshop
- Superintendent Weiss will provide questions for staff in preparation for the workshop.
- Provide clear idea of tradeoffs and site specific examples
- Use best practices from the Redwood Middle School Task Force

7.4 **Noyce Foundation Grant Request – Cambrian, Los Gatos, Saratoga Union School District Proposal for Noyce Foundation Funding (Mathematics)**

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented a grant request which has been submitted to the Noyce Foundation, contingent upon the Saratoga Union School District Board of Trustee's approval. The grant calls for the continuation of the administration of the MARS math exam to students in grades 3-8, a math coach to support teachers in grades K-8, and professional development for teachers in mathematics instruction. A request of \$67,000 for grant funding and \$86,000 in SUSD general funds is included in the grant request.

SUSD has participated with the Noyce Foundation for over five years and this year they have announced a change in direction which will allow them to focus on data to improve student performance and concentrate their work with fewer school districts. A consortium made up of SUSD, Los Gatos and Cambrian school districts have applied for the 2007-08 grant and it was written subject to the approval of the board. Superintendent Weiss announced that the consortium has made it through to the second round and will participate in interviews next Wednesday.

Discussion included:

- Does the Noyce Foundation advocate a particular curriculum?
No, they study the approach of students and find trends where students need support
- Balanced approach is called for - basic skills and ability to develop conceptual understanding of mathematics – works in that framework regardless of textbook
- Allows us to continue to administer the MARs exam
- Helps to supplement the salary for a math coach
- Helps provide professional development for teachers
- Mardi Kambish added the Noyce Foundation provides: opportunities for discussions on mathematics education and in-depth conversations with experts such as NCTM (National Council for Teachers of Mathematics) speakers; Summer Coaching Institute where a small group of teachers meet in August and 5 times during the school year to talk about content, focus on different strands for mathematics, and curriculum planning.

- This collaborative grant opportunity provides more opportunities to see what other districts are doing, to work with other coaches, to share assessments and information, and jointly support teachers.
- Redwood Middle School teacher Nancy Coleman added that this is very high quality professional development – the ability to quickly turn around MARS data to be used in classroom this year has been very helpful.
- Peggy Johnston commented that NCTM is an advocate of New Math – it would be reasonable to take the best of both types of math.
- Shinku Sharma added that it is good to have both testing in critical thinking/problem solving (MARS) and concrete (STAR). She supports different types of assessment.
- Does Noyce provide materials for use in classrooms? Yes, they provide materials teachers can use in their classrooms - many are past MARS problems. Much of the professional development focus is looking at student work.
- Dory Albert added that she would like the Math Advisory Committee to review this.
- Noyce is aimed at how students understand mathematics and how to teach mathematics; the more we know about techniques the more we can apply to our situation.
- Diane Smalley, Saratoga School Principal, commented that MARS is a different way of assessing students and provides an in-depth view of the process students use to get an answer.
- Mimi Mather noted a general decline in grades 6-8.

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Pragati Grover to approve the Noyce Foundation grant request.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.5 **Approval of Spending Plans for New State Funding**

Principals from all schools presented spending plans for the new funding from the state. Spending plans have been approved by school site councils and have been through a review by staff. The superintendent recommended approval of the spending plans. Board approval of spending plans by May 1, 2007 is required to access the new state funding.

New State Funding:

- School Site Discretionary Block Grant – one time funding
- School District Discretionary Block Grant – one time funding
- Instructional Materials, Library Materials, and Education Technology – one time funding
- Arts, Music, & P.E. Materials and Equipment Block Grant – one time funding
- Arts and Music Block Grant – ongoing funding

School Site spending plans are available for review at the District Office.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by CR to approve all school spending plans for new state funding from the state as presented.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.6 **Third Quarter Board Goals Report**

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented the board with a summary report on third quarter progress toward 2006-07 district goals.

Promote a district culture of mutual respect, integrity, and equity

- Saratoga School has developed an anti-bullying policy
- Foothill School has held a number of events which celebrate the diversity of our community

Use assessment data to align instruction to student needs

- School Plan data input to county office of education was completed. STAR data is now available for staff online.
- MARS assessment was administered to students in grades 3-8, bar-coding was implemented via Powerschool, teachers have MARS scores much earlier.

Focus professional development efforts on the improvement of math instruction

- Staff has been using the MARS toolkits to support student success
- Part of the January 19 professional development day was used to support the use of differentiated instruction for students in math and to develop curriculum maps.
- K-8 math and science standards overview documents were created and posted to the district website
- Staff has taken first steps to implement the Problem of the Month program, K-8

Use communication to inform and build understanding

- Single page document was used to clarify new state funding
- SEF/SUSD board meeting was held to review SEF programs and brainstorm for the future
- Math Advisory Committee was formed – a link on the SUSD home page features information related to the work of the committee and to mathematics education
- Denise Pope met with principals to collect information for a public presentation given at Redwood Middle School on the topic of school and stress
- Board workshop was held to communicate California School Board's Association Masters in Governance information
- The following committees are in place in SUSD:
 - Budget Advisory Committee
 - District Leadership Team
 - Math Advisory Committee
 - Science Instructional Materials Task Force
 - Technology Advisory Committee
 - Wellness/Emergency Preparedness
 - English Learner Advisory Committee 9ELAC)
 - Presidents' Council
 - Coordinating Council
 - Health and Welfare Task Force

Align planning and expenditures with board goals, teaching, and learning

- The process for developing spending plans was completed with school site councils and staff
- Alignment to board goals and school plans was key component of planning process

Recognize, honor, and communicate about excellent work which benefits students

- Board meeting agendas have included student and staff presentations recognizing excellent programs which benefit students
- Teacher of the Year information was received from the county office of education

Effectively use technology to improve learning, efficiency and communication

- Powerschool training at Redwood Middle School has supported the staff in using Powergrade.
- All K-5 teachers have been trained to take attendance with Powerschool.
- Technology Plan draft (curriculum standards) continues to be focus of technology advisory sub-committee.

- Listservs and websites continue to be used to support less reliance on paper communication.
- A server was set up to accommodate teacher websites. A policy was adopted by the board regulating the development and content of websites.

7.7 Local Educational Agency Plan (LEAP) - Report

Assistant Superintendent Louise Levy presented an updated version of the district’s Local Educational Agency Plan (LEAP).

The LEA Plan as mandated by (No Child Left Behind) NCLB, Section 1112 serves the following purposes:

- Five-year operational plan (July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2008) to be updated annually,
- Guide for federal and state-funded programs, allocations of resources, and reporting requirements,
- Single, comprehensive plan describing services for all students,
- Blueprint for students to achieve the state content standards,
- Basis for continual parent and community involvement, planning, implementation, monitoring, and assessment,
- Summary of all existing federal and state plans that can establish a focus for raising academic performance for all students

Louise thanked all those who participated through the Coordinating Council, Wellness and Emergency Preparedness Committee, Rosalie Chako, and Dianne Wall, in updating the LEA Plan.

7.8 Williams Quarterly Report

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented the quarterly complaint report as required by the Williams Settlement. No complaints were filed with any school in the district during the reporting period January 1 – March 31, 2006.

A motion was made by Pragati Grover and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Williams Quarterly Report.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma
 NOES: 0
 ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.9 First Reading Board Policy Revision – 7000 Series – Facilities

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented a draft of the Series 7000 – Board Policies – Facilities for First Reading. These policies will be presented for Second Reading on May 8, 2007.

7.10 Math Advisory Committee – Report

Superintendent Lane Weiss provided a summary of the discussions taking place with the math advisory committee. A timeline for topics and board agenda topics in the area of math education was shared with the board.

The last MAC meeting featured a variety of students with different perspectives, members engaged in small groups to review concerns and interests regarding 8th grade Algebra, a discussion of textbooks, the role of the board, the state textbook process, and process at Redwood Middle School. There was a good exchange of information. Handouts were provided from other school districts and from parents Dory Albert and Suman Goel. The next meeting will be May 7, 2007.

Topic	Projected date of board report/action	Notes
Redwood Middle School Course Offerings for the 2007-2008 school year	May 8, 2007 Report May 22, 2007 Action	Discussion includes how SUSD will address algebra standards for 8 th graders and 8 th graders who are placed in geometry. Discussion will include instructional materials used in Redwood Middle School math courses.
Staff report to board on math program	September 2007 Report	Report to the board on the implementation of action taken in spring 2007.
STAR testing and MARS math exam results	October 2007 Report	
Math instruction, assessment, and curriculum mapping – K-8	November 2007 Report	This discussion will set the stage for the instructional materials adoption process.
Adoption of textbooks/instructional materials	January 2008 Report Interim reports, 2008-2009 Action on adoption can Take place no later than June 2009.	The state board of education is scheduled to approve instructional materials for math in November 2007. School districts in California have 24 months to adopt and purchase textbooks/instructional materials for students.

Board Discussion:

- Board members thanked Superintendent Weiss and staff members of the MAC for their work and for listening to parents regarding what works best for their child. A request was made to provide parent workshops giving parents opportunities to talk with a math educator.
- It is sometimes best to trust teachers and the principal in knowing what is best for students in the classroom.
- The MAC consists of 35 members – does it work?
Superintendent Weiss responded that meetings include good use of handouts, breaking into small groups to speak and be heard, and a summary at the end of the meeting. It is important to be as inclusive as possible. There is commitment to working for what's best for our kids. Hats off to our teachers because what is heard is sometimes critical. We are working to move forward constructively.
- Administrators have spent a lot of time getting the right, well trained staff in place. We must be sensitive to the people we are working with and work cooperatively, not in an adversarial way.

Other Discussion:

- Beth Polito added that it is the role of the administrator to provide direction for teachers and to support them.
- Mardi Kambish thanked the board for their support of teachers.
- Mimi Mather appreciates that the MAC has been set up and seeing teachers from different schools in this forum. She would like students to be challenged and competitive and have access to Algebra for all.
- Superintendent Weiss responded to the question of what information is needed. The MAC will meet on May 7th and will discuss Algebra. The board will be provided with proposals, and input from staff and parents at the May 8th board meeting. They will then have time to review this information before being asked to approve a recommendation.
- Ann Walsh spoke about concerns regarding 8A and 8C math curriculum at Redwood Middle School. She asked the board to think about the two methodologies (abstract and concrete) and to think about how these translate into student learning. She thanked the board and staff for hearing her concerns.

- Suman Goel shared that she hears concerns from other parents and believes that teachers are there for the students.
- Dory Albert shared that she feels there is confusion when supplementary materials replace textbooks. She requested a curriculum map be provided for parents at the beginning of the school year.

Superintendent Weiss added that leeway in the use of textbooks has been past practice in Saratoga Union School District and that a change in direction is not to be taken lightly.

8. **SUSD Committee Reports**

8.1 **Budget Advisory Committee**

- Superintendent Weiss – developing budget recommendation list for May 22, 2007 board meeting.

8.2 **District Leadership Team**

- Superintendent Weiss – discussed professional development for 2007-08 and spending plans.

8.3 **Science Instructional Materials Task Force**

- Louise Levy – working on developing a survey for staff; next meeting will match results to materials.

8.4 **Health and Welfare Task Force**

- Kym Plaing - reported the district will stay with Kaiser and Blue Cross – all will increase co-pays by \$5.

8.5 **Technology Advisory Committee**

- Superintendent Weiss – sub-committee work will continue.

9. **Communications**

9.1 **Community Comments**

There were no comments from the community.

10. **Future Agenda Items**

The Board discussed items for future agendas, the board meeting schedule/structure, and possible future workshops for in-depth discussion.

- Set Workshop on Redwood Middle School Instructional Day
- Approval of LEA Plan
- Second Reading – Board Policy 7000 series

Next meeting: May 8, 2007
Redwood Middle School Library

11. **Adjourn to Closed Session**

Board members adjourned to continue discussion of:

2.3 Superintendent Contract Discussion/Negotiations

12. **Return to Open Session**

Board President Michael Gipe announced no action was taken in Closed Session.

13. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Clerk of the Board