



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SARATOGA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting
May 8, 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 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.

A motion was made by Pragati Grover and seconded by Cindy Ruby to approve the Personnel Report.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Personnel Report

Resignation

Ken Saltman, SUSD Gardener, resigned effective May 2, 2007.

4. Action/Consent Items

- 4.1 Approval of Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes for April 24, 2007
- 4.3 Approval of Warrants for April 2007

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Action/Consent Items including a correction to the minutes of April 24, 2007.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

5. **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**

- Superintendent Weiss announced a celebration for Teacher Appreciation Day will be held tomorrow with an event planned for the entire staff. A Hawaiian luau will be held at Redwood Middle School in honor of our teachers, district nurse, and staff. He thanked teachers and staff for the positive contributions they make each and every day and for their dedication, hard work, care, and concern for our students.

5.4 **Comments from the Board**

- There were no comments from the board.

6. **Spotlight- Argonaut School Musical, *Aladdin, Jr.***

Alex Chapman thanked the board for the opportunity to spotlight the talents of Argonaut students performing in *Aladdin, Jr.* He introduced producers, Happy Ho and Jean Poo and director Lauren Heatton. The following students performed songs from the musical: Derek Sun, Sarah Finley, Jessica Chang, Usha Raman, Arathi Sabada, Will Guy, Anushree Dugar, Julianne Lau, Sarah Arment, Ankitha Sarvesh, Ariana Wright, Lauren Plesse, Stephanie Chu, Cynthia Hao, Keerthi Vedantam, Siobhan McMillan. Performances are scheduled for May 18-20, 2007.

7. **Action/Report Items**

7.1 **Math Report – Math Program for 8th Graders at Redwood Middle School - Algebra and Geometry**

Superintendent Lane Weiss invited members of the Math Advisory Committee (MAC) to stand to be acknowledged and thanked them for their work. Parent members Stayton Chock, Dory Albert and Jill Milton volunteered to share recommendations and advice on future plans for the 8th grade math program at Redwood Middle School.

Stayton Chock - Math Advisory Committee Proposal, May 8, 2007

This parent proposal included information on student placement, instruction methods, testing, information from neighboring districts, examples of some students' placement experiences, and a letter from Saratoga High School Principal Jeff Anderson. This information will be posted on the district website. His recommendation calls for open access to math placement, more geometry classes and traditional teacher led instruction with state approved textbooks 90% of the time.

Dory Albert stated that she fully supports Stayton's proposals for pre-Algebra, a full year course of Algebra, and Geometry, with California State approved textbooks used by Saratoga High School and taught by a high school credentialed teacher. She added that she supports parents' right to request a placement waiver. Also, Dory recommended: a curriculum map being in place at the beginning of the school year; more time for classroom instruction, math electives, math labs, peer tutoring, teacher tutoring; evaluations of students math placement be communicated to parents in the spring; supplementary materials that meet state standards; no connected math in 8th grade.

Jill Milton reported there are over thirty members on the Math Advisory Committee and commended Superintendent Weiss for a fabulous job on facilitating the group. The MAC has had the opportunity to hear and consider a wide variety of opinions including hearing from two groups of students. The group agreed on three choices: Geometry, Algebra and partial Algebra. She supports parents' rights to override student placement decisions and looking into the ways other districts offer Algebra. She added that it is important in this

community that people talk to each other as early as possible, both parents and teachers, and that increased communication and information about what is being taught is extremely important.

Parent/Community Input:

Suzanne Sullivan – worked on Algebra for all, pilot program that began in January has been fairly successful, success is based on collaboration between parents and teachers encouraged the board to consider looking at the whole 6-8 math program. She supports free choice and options for students and parents.

Mimi Mather – spoke on behalf of a group of parents. She supports open access for 8th grade math where teachers make a recommendation and parents choose and would like to see this implemented by August 2007. Other suggestions include: researching math programs in other districts; eliminating permanent math tracks; expanding course options to include pre-Algebra, full year high school equivalent Algebra with approved text and Geometry; offering a math elective and comprehensive support structure; providing a curriculum map at the start of the school year; making sure students are competent, challenged and competitive. She added that teachers' input is critical and their perspective is valued. She thanked Superintendent Weiss and staff for their work.

Tracy Nobles gave her allotted time to Mimi Mather.

Krishna Kolluri – parent of RMS 6th grade student, sees a problem at the middle school level; would like to see a collaborative process as he sees that both teachers and parents have the interest of students in mind. He asked the board to consider open access for 6th-8th grade students as they learn best when just a little bit out of their comfort zone but not so far out that their confidence is lost. The status quo is not good enough for kids to be set up for success.

Janaki Murthy - thanked board members for the opportunity to speak, shared her own children's experience with math placements and especially appreciates teachers instilling a love of math in their students. She favors a situation where students do not need to attend summer school.

Karlina Ott – shared her family's experience, would like to have known ramifications of changing from 8a to 8c. She appreciates all the parents who stood up to say we have a problem and suggested that at the end of the first quarter parents be able to move a student who has been misplaced.

Priti Dugar – spoke about the excellent experience her students had at RMS. Her students enjoy math, were well placed, and she agreed the system has worked at times for some children. She believes this issue begins at elementary school and that students should be encouraged to enjoy math, be placed in the right spot and each child given a fair chance.

Julie Paolini – Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher and former RMS parent, shared that her children were well prepared for Saratoga High School, placed appropriately and teachers were willing to listen and make changes. As an RSP she works with many teachers who differentiate and provide extra help. We are a public school and must teach all students. She agrees with some points on open access but it must be carefully done.

Dave Jensen – parent of two 6th grader students (one A one C), expressed interest in proposals that have been proven to work at other districts.

Redwood Middle School Staff Input

Mardi Kambish, Math Department Chair, shared a draft document created collaboratively by the RMS Math Department related to 8th grade algebra for next year. This information included: data from current full course students, placement rubrics, differences in pacing between 8c and full course, textbook, homework, key standards, providing parent information on sequencing, new textbook adoption in math.

The RMS Math Department is trying to move as quickly as reasonably possible to a full course of Algebra. Redwood Staff Recommendation for Algebra Structure for 2007-08:
Courses:

- Full and partial Algebra and Geometry (45 minute class/ 7 period day)
- Expand criteria to include Math CST, MARS, subjective criteria, and classroom grades (25% each)

Placement:

- Placement recommendation using established criteria with full disclosure of data provided at the end of the school year
- Families can make appointments with teachers or administrators to review data

Instructional Materials:

- Instructional materials aligned with state standards including a variety of materials that efficiently address each key concept in the standards
- Provide parents clear and consistent guidance for home support

Student Support:

- Support for students such as a math lab or other opportunities for support
- Clearly communicate benefits of two years of Algebra instruction

Teacher Support:

- Teachers will need time to work with families on placement recommendations, to establish home instruction materials, to establish assessments and support materials

Redwood Middle School staff is interested in exploring what it would take to provide a full course of Algebra to all appropriate 8th grade students in 2008-09.

Board /Community/Staff Discussion/Questions

- Class periods are 45 minutes for all classes except on minimum days
- Clarification of criteria: 2 years of CST and MARS assessment data, grades, work habits, level of interest, problem solving ability, use a composite to measure
- Summative assessments – summaries of a particular assessment (tests, grades)
- Formative assessments – done in a variety of ways, they are used to give teachers direction on what students know or where they need help. They can be formal or informal.
- How has Geometry been taught? It has been a traditionally taught class 100% of the time at RMS.
- What changes has RMS staff made? Changes include professional development; flexible, expanded criteria; willing to actively communicate with parents earlier; offer conferences and provide home materials.
- Is a grade of “C” considered successful? The expectation is a C- or better at Saratoga High School and that is the benchmark we have to use.
- In defining success are we looking for a high level of mastery or competency?
- Is the partial Algebra class working? This is a wonderful opportunity for students to have 2 years of Algebra.
- If we were to go to open access what would happen? We would have some students misplaced and would need a system in place to help those that would fail.
- How do other school districts handle this? We are still looking into this.
- How is Algebra presented to students? Now it is presented in a traditional method: teacher directed stand and deliver with textbook - a warm-up, review of homework,

presentation of new material, sample questions. There is not time for a variety of hands-on, paring, and group work because they have to get through the material. More time is needed when presentation of new material is done eclectically and students are allowed to come to their own conclusions and then come back to the classroom to see multiple ways of solving problems.

- Is there cross curricular planning? Yes, sometimes with science and teachers would like to do more of that.
- Decision on upcoming textbook adoption will need to be coordinated with the high school.

Board President Michael Gipe summarized by stating the short term need is for 2007-08 and the long term need is overall math in K-8. This will take time and the board and staff are willing to get there as fast as possible.

Board President Michael Gipe thanked all parents and staff for coming to the meeting and for their input. The board is scheduled to take action on 2007-08 math in 8th grade at their regularly scheduled board meeting on May 22, 2007 in the Redwood Middle School Library. All were invited to send emails to board@saratogausd.org and to attend the meeting.

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.

7.2 Public Hearing to Sunshine Tentative Agreement with Saratoga Teachers' Association and the Saratoga Union School District for 2007-08

The Saratoga Teachers' Association and the Saratoga Union School District have reached tentative agreement for the 2007-08 school year on the following:

- Staff Learning and Collaboration Time (SLCT) Days/Calendar and revised schedule for spring parent teacher conferences
- Contract Language: Paternity Leaves
- Compensation: Health and Welfare Benefits

Board President Michael Gipe opened the public hearing at 9:17 p.m. and the public was invited to comment. Letters may be sent to the Board or Superintendent, 20460 Forrest Hills Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Copies of the agreement may be reviewed on the district website at www.saratogausd.org or at the District Office. The public hearing will be closed May 22, 2007 and after hearing comments from the community the Board will be asked to vote on the agreement.

7.3 Facilities Use Policy

The board discussed modifications of implementing the facility use policy adopted in January 2007. A district sub-committee including Chief Business official Ellen Tipton and board members Jack Chang and Shinku Sharma was formed to discuss possible methods of responding to community input on fees assessed to user groups in SUSD. Jack Chang reported consensus was reached to amend the policy to include a new category to address the needs of constituents with hardships.

A tracking system will be implemented to show how fees have been used and this will be evaluated at the end of the next year. It was proposed that the policy be reviewed every three years.

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Pragati Grover to accept the proposal including a modification for religious organizations to be included in Group 2 for occasional use and Group 3 for regular use.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.4 Request for Approval of Local Educational Agency Plan (LEAP)

Assistant Superintendent Louise Levy presented an updated version of the district's Local Educational Agency Plan (LEAP) and request board approval. 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

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Cindy Ruby to approve the Local Educational Agency Plan.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

7.5 Budget Update

Superintendent Lane Weiss and Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton updated the board on the following budget topics:

- Property Tax Revenue for the 2007-2008 school year
Expenditures for the 2007-2008 school year
Summary of General Fund Income/Expense 3 Year Forecast
- Physical Education Grant Application – Physical Education Teacher Incentive Program Plan is part of new state funding and we have applied for this grant.
- Noyce Foundation Consortium Grant Request Application - There will be a phone conference on May 14th with the Noyce Foundation and on June 4th we will finalize and sign agreements.

Other discussion:

- SEF is projecting a deficit and will make a request from the general fund to cover some needs.
- Budget Advisory Committee recommendation will be made on May 22, 2007

7.6 Second Reading Board Policy Revision – 7000 Series – Facilities

Superintendent Lane Weiss present a draft of the Series 7000 – Board Policies – Facilities for First Reading. These policies will be presented for Third Reading and approval on May 22, 2007.

7.7 Request for Approval of Board Meeting Calendar for 2007-08

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented a draft Board meeting calendar for the 2007-08 school year and requested the Board’s approval.

A motion was made by Pragati Grover and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the 2007-08 Board Meeting Calendar. The meeting dates in April will be April 15th and April 29th, 2008.

AYES: Gipe, Ruby, Grover, Chang, Sharma

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

8. SUSD Committee Reports

8.1 Budget Advisory Committee

Superintendent Lane Weiss announced the next meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2007. Discussion will include the upcoming budget recommendation to the board.

8.2 District Leadership Team

Superintendent Lane Weiss announced the next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2007.

8.3 Science Instructional Materials Task Force

Assistant Superintendent Louise Levy announced the next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2007 and will be a half-day meeting where publishers will be selected for the 2007-08 pilot program.

8.4 Health and Welfare Task Force

Human Resources Director Kym Plaing announced the second annual Wellness Fair was held May 2nd with over 120 staff and family in attendance. Board member Cindy Ruby volunteered to write Linda Jacobs of Terrance Insurance, Inc. a letter of appreciation on behalf of the board for her help in organizing the Wellness Fair. Open Enrollment period has been scheduled for May 15 – June 15, 2007.

8.5 Technology Advisory Committee

This committee is working in small groups on the district technology plan and on upgrading the PowerSchool program.

8.6 Wellness/Emergency Preparedness Committee

Assistant Superintendent Louise Levy announced last meeting of the year was held April 23, 2007 at the Saratoga Fire Department. She will bring a proposal to the board for purchasing emergency supplies for next year.

9. Communications

9.1 Community Comments

Susan Germeraad shared that she appreciates being able to choose instructional materials and would like to see this preserved as much as possible.

Board President Michael Gipe thanked *Saratoga News* reporter Michele Tjin for her nice article in the Saratoga News.

10. Future Agenda Items

The Board discussed items for future agendas.

Next meetings:

May 15, 2007, Board Workshop, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Redwood Middle School Library

May 22, 2007, Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Redwood Middle School Library

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Clerk of the Board