

PACIFIC GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
Corrected Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 21, 2008

The Board of Education of the Pacific Grove Unified School District held a meeting on August 21st at the Pacific Grove High School Library.

I. OPENED BUSINESS

A. Called to Order 6:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call President: Mike Niccum
Clerk: Beth Shammas
Members Present: Jessie Bray
Bill Phillips
Tony Sollecito
Administration Present: Ralph Porras
Robin Blakley
Board Recorder: Laura Emerson
Student Board Member Present: Brandon Cepass (arrived 6:50 p.m.)

C. Adopted Agenda
Porras noted the addition of Contracts for Service that were not included in the original board packet but delivered to Board members prior to this meeting.

MOTION Sollecito/Bray to adopt agenda as corrected

Public comment: none

Motion CARRIED 5 – 0

D. Identified Closed Session Topics

- a. Superintendent's Contract
- b. Personnel matter
- c. Litigation matter

E. Public comment on Closed Session items

Cathie Tyndall, retired member of CTA and PGTA said she is a teacher who has fallen through the cracks. She asked the Board to consider the options and offer her protection by providing her with health insurance.

F. Adjourned to Closed Session 6:05 p.m.

II. CLOSED SESSION

III. RECONVENED IN OPEN SESSION 7:00 p.m.

A. Reported action taken in Closed Session

- a. Superintendent's Contract
The Board gave staff direction on this matter
- b. Personnel matter
The Board reviewed this matter and gave direction to staff
- c. Litigation matter
The Board reviewed this matter and gave direction to staff

B. Pledge of Allegiance pledge recited

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Written Communication
Phillips received a letter from a Forest Grove parent praising the education her child received last year.

Porras has received emails from parents regarding concerns at both elementary schools as well as letters of appreciation regarding how hard the facilities crews worked in getting the school sites ready for our students.

B. Board Member Comments

Cepress said the Breaker Buddy program will be extended this year with upper classmen helping freshmen through the year. ASB is moving away from hip hop music to techno music to avoid the problems with inappropriate dancing that occurred last year. Freshmen have elected class officers and the results will be announced next week. ASB is also taking a new look at recycling on their campus. ASB leaders will be traveling soon to two leadership conferences. Many students have expressed a concern with the future of the marching band.

Phillips said Robert Down school, with its newly painted exterior, is something to be proud of. While the HS football field is dug up, he would like to see students participate in burying a time capsule at the fifty yard line.

Shammas would have liked to have seen more detail in the exterior painting project at Robert Down and the Middle School. She imagines it must be challenging for principals to contain the students during construction. In speaking to those in the audience, she said that the school board must look at everything the district does and create a balance in order to be most effective. "We are looking through a prism at the whole district, it is a balancing act and it is difficult to make everyone happy."

Bray said she wished there were representatives from each group (PTA, school site councils, etc.) attending the Board meetings. She is enjoying the visibility of construction work being done with Measure D funds as a way of showing the community where the money is being spent. She had a good time at the Back to School breakfast and thinks it's a wonderful way to start the school year.

Sollecito is thrilled to see the visible Measure D work going on, to have it out in the open.

C. Superintendent Report

Porras congratulated everyone for a successful Welcome Back Breakfast, that he received many positive comments. He also expressed his appreciation to the summer school staff and the devotion of Principal Linda Williams in running another successful program. He gave Board members information on a survey conducted through the Panetta Institute that measured college students' surprising views and level of interest in politics and public service. (Copies are available in the District Office). The State Budget deadlock situation as reported in CASBO's *newsbreak* continues to be an area of serious concern because it does impact categorical funds. As a participant in the Monterey County Education Coalition, along with ACSA, CASBO, CFT, CRTA, CSBA, CSEA, CTA, and PTA, he was part of the group that drafted a letter which will be sent to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Senator Don Perata, Assemblyman Karen Bass, Senator Dave Cogdill and Assemblyman Michael Villines asking for immediate action to 1) enact legislation authorizing the use of federal school improvement funds and passage of the state budget. (Copies of the letter are available at the District Office.)

V. INDIVIDUALS DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Jennifer Ross wanted to publicly thank the Board for their support of the Adult School preschool program. All Pacific Grove children on the waiting list are now attending school.

Matt Bell thanked the Board for putting their faith in him. The job is exciting and fun. Construction has had only a minor impact on the High School campus. DMC is sensitive to their needs. As Cepress explained, the Breaker Buddy system was handled a little differently this year, being extended beyond the first day of school. He and Assistant Principal Barbara Martinez have visited Social Studies classes to review the basic rules with the students and get their feedback on the first day of school. Everyone enjoyed the motivational speaker.

Wendell Nuss said the parents in Music Boosters have made a commitment to provide a certain amount of funding towards the marching band but they still need more money. Since the school year began earlier this year, why not end it earlier and eliminate the extra days.

Angela Holm thanked the Board for their support of the music program. "Funding 65 students who meet every day

is a very worthy effort. The marching band is a symbol of school spirit. It is a vital source of school and community pride.”

Niccum asked the Superintendent to meet with the High School Principal regarding the marching band and report back to them at their next meeting. All other Board members concurred with wanting to assist the Marching Band.

VI. PRESENTATION

PGUSD 2008 Summer School Summative Report (Copies are available in the District Office)

Porras praised Principal Williams and her staff for working with over 100 students who successfully attained the benchmarks for their respective level.

Williams said the process involved sending out diagnostic prescriptive teaching input forms to students’ former teachers to find out what the weaknesses were and to focus specifically on those areas. She admitted spending a lot of time after school and on week ends developing the curriculum. She got parents involved from day one with reading to their children at the library. Children Librarian Lisa Maldonado, also helped, and there was even a Spanish section of books. Of interest is that, as the parents helped their children with reading, they were motivated to become readers as well.

Shammas praised Williams for solidifying the summer school program. Through her work, Shammas said she sees 16 year olds reading at a 2nd grade level through her probation work. She offered the Board’s support in continuing this level of summer school involvement. She would like to write a letter to the Librarian. The support of parents is such a critical piece.

Bray appreciated the thorough report and wants the district to follow up and monitor recommendations in the report.

Sollecito ~~would like to see as many children as possible attending summer school~~ hoped that there is room for all the kids who are recommended for summer school to attend.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Superintendent 2008-09 Contract and Compensation Adjustments for 2008-09
- B. Minutes of June 12, 2008 Board of Education Regular Meeting
- C. Minutes of June 18, 2008 Board of Education Special Meeting
- D. Minutes of August 7, 2008 Board of Education Special Meeting
- E. Certificated Assignment Order # 1
- F. Classified Assignment Order # 1
- G. Acceptance of Donations
- H. Warrant Schedules No. 477 & 478
- I. Revolving Cash Report No. 11
- J. Cash Receipts Report No. 11
- K. Approval of Resolution #828 Authorizing Execution of State Preschool Contract
- L. Preferred Meals Systems Contract Renewal – 2008/09
- M. Approval of 2008/09 MCOE Instructional Resources and Technology Services Agreement
- N. Acceptance of Quarterly Treasurer’s Report
- O. Approval of 2008/09 MCOE Internet Access Agreement
- P. Contract with Visiting Nurses Association
- Q. Approval of Contract for Services – Lozano Smith
- R. Approval of Contract for Services – Kronick, Moskowitz, Tiedemann & Girard
- S. Continue Increase of Hours for Special Education Instructional Assistants
- T. California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) School Representatives
- U. After School Enrichment (ASE) Program 2008-2009
- V. Contract for Services, Lynn Clements
- W. Contract for Services, Ani Silva BTSA Coordinator
- X. Contract for Services, Pamela Chrislock
- Y. Contract for Services, Mary Beth Reinhart
- Z. Authorized Execution of Mandated Claim Service Contract with Centration

- AA. Approval of Contract for Services - Peninsula Sports Management Group High School Officiating
- BB. Ratification of Lease/Purchase of Maintenance Truck

Niccum said a change was made to the Superintendent's Contract and Compensation Adjustments, that the term of his contract has been extended another year to 2012.

MOTION Brav/Shammas to approve Consent Agenda as corrected

Public comment: Porras introduced Barbara Martinez and Mahnoush Hariraz to the Board, and acknowledged Buck Roggeman and Mary Riedel as the new leadership team at the Middle School. He is also pleased that Matt Bell accepted the principal position at the High School.

Motion CARRIED 5 - 0

VIII. ACTION/DISCUSSION

- A. Resolution No 829, Resolution to Teach

MOTION Brav/Phillips to approve the Resolution No. 829

Public comment: none

Motion CARRIED 5 – 0

- B. Report to the Board on Property Tax

Blakley said that when the budget is adopted in June, the largest portion of revenue is property tax. Two uncertainties at the time the budget was adopted are what last year's property tax revenue would be, since not all the payments have been made, and what the change for this year's property tax will be. He uses assumptions to calculate that revenue. "One assumption was that the property tax would grow by an additional 5.0%, and another was that the district would receive all the property tax we thought we were going to receive in 2007-08. We were close but not right on. A small deviation is significant when dealing with \$18 million. Last year, we built a budget on the assumption that the property tax was going to grow by 6.0% and it ended up growing by 5.5%. The net effect of this is that our projection is \$101,000 less than what we recommended you build your budget on back in June. This is in addition to the \$84,000 reduction in anticipated tax revenues from last year. Part of the problem is that as homes sell, they are being reappraised at a lower level. Another problem is that as homes are being repossessed, their tax payment is held until the house is sold. Normally we receive \$200,000 - \$300,00 in back taxes; but last year we saw that jump up to \$570,000 and this year we are projecting it will be \$630,000. We are hopeful that as we close the books for 2007-08 we will see a positive shift in the ending balance to allow the restoration of the required reserve. If this does not occur, one remedy may be to look seriously at the carryover numbers and not just allow the money to remain with those departments that did not spend all of their budgeted funds, but return some of that to the General Fund.

- C. Review of Enrollment

Blakley stated that enrollment projections are close to actual, that the only anomaly was the uneven distribution of students between the two elementary schools, a situation that is not uncommon when there are two schools with the same grades.

In response to Sollecito's inquiry about the definition of a "combo" class, Bennett replied that in creating the 4-5 combo class at Forest Grove, teachers carefully assembled the class with a group of very teachable students. There will be two language and two mathematics curricula in the one classroom, which is less of a range than the number of reading groups that exist in a one grade classroom. The key is in the structure of the class and the teacher. His teachers are incredibly enthusiastic about helping and have already offered their assistance.

Public Comment

Petula Lee has a 4th grader at Robert Down. She is grateful to the school district for helping her children but she is worried that her son Creighton is too stressed out and is having sensory problems.

Tammy Stickler said the 4th grade class sizes at Robert Down are too large. She voted for the Parcel Tax because it promised small classes.

Pam Cain is parent of a 4th grader at Robert Down. She and her husband have been volunteering weekly since

their child was in kindergarten. Parents are more than numbers.

Kristy Sebok said the teacher with 28 students does not have the time or ability to adequately teach. They should have an aide. She is looking to the Board as elected officials to do the right thing for the students.

Mary McFadden said Robert Down needs another teacher or the situation is going to get “ugly.”

Niccum thanked the parents for coming out. “We appreciate everything you do. Parents are a key part of this operation. It’s a tough situation; it’s a difficult numbers situation, something we’ve been wrestling with for many years.... For many years, Forest Grove has had to deal with big classes and the same concerns... I was right where you are when my daughter was in 4th and 5th grades. I think there were 28 kids in her 5th grade class and I was upset about it, but there was really nothing we could do.”

Phillips thanked the parents for coming to the Board meeting and for their participation in the classroom. “What great role models you are for the kids. I realize it is a difficult situation, because we have two different sites, because we don’t have a K-2 and 3-5 we can’t balance the classes. In years past it seemed like we always had surplus tax revenue that we could use to solve the problem but we don’t have it this year. We have a lot of needs this year. The [High School] band is looking for money for their instruments and uniforms and to pay the fees to be in parades....We’d love to explore some options but it really comes down to dollars.”

Bray said “This is going to be very hard for me and I need to know that you know I have such respect for your feelings and your position and I want to thank you so much for coming. There really are not easy answers to this.....Lots of things are doable. As I look at these numbers, I’m not telling you anything you don’t know. You know the main reason you’re having shock is that your children have been in classes of under twenty....It’s the change that feels so shocking....One of my daughters teaches in Southern California and she would give anything to have a class under 35. So we are in a very unique and blessed situation, a situation I don’t object to at all. But we do get into these crunches and there aren’t these quick fix answers....When Beth and I were first running in 1997, this issue was very prevalent. A committee was formed by the Board that preceded us. It was a very well balanced committee and they studied everything. We still at that time had all of our kindergarteners going to the [David Avenue] Kindergarten Center. The parents loved it very much. The children spent one year on the David Avenue campus and then were separated to go to two different elementary schools and then came back together again in 6th. The committee’s recommendation was that the best thing for the District was to have all the children in the same grade at the same site. The parents objected so with that group’s permission they went to the second option which was closing the Kindergarten Center and going to two K-5’s. I’ve regretted that ever since because each year, and this goes back to 1998 – ten years now, each year we have exactly the same problem – trying to balance classes. The saddest thing for me is the misperception that there’s something horrible about transferring between two excellent elementary schools. I would love it if our little kids were a stable community. Most of our kids start with ~~this us~~ in kindergarten and go all the way through 12th grade. I have a dream. How wonderful if our dear little kids could start with our preschools, come together as kindergarteners through 2nd grade at one site, then move together as one body with all their buddies. We could balance class sizes and teachers could teach their grade level of preference. I feel this so strongly. They could move together a few blocks from one site to the other. We could have a wonderful science lab and a wonderful music program that would be appropriate to their grade level without trying to duplicate facilities and having each not as good as it could be....They could experience a very special nurturing atmosphere...We would have a 3-3-3-4 configuration, K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12. There would still be problems, but balancing class size, getting rid of this comparison, competitiveness. We would have two excellent elementary schools that would mesh....We do need to address this. ... Until we take the bull by the horns and recognize how much better it would be. It takes the support of parents... Each time an independent group made up of parents, teachers and community members met, their recommendation were K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12. I’m so glad you’re hear to listen to us and let us hear from you, and thank you for staying until it came up on the agenda so we could talk. Thank you for being here.”

Sollecito’s daughters were in the same situation in 4th and 5th grades at Forest Grove. As parents they considered moving their daughters to Robert Down where the class sizes were much smaller. But, the girls did not want to move. In spite of the large numbers, they still received an outstanding education. “Let’s look at reconfiguration.”

Shammas had four children attend PG schools and none had the opportunity to be in small classes. She does not understand the fear with combination classes. “Class size alone does not determine an education.” She did

not like that parents were notified at the last minute about the change.

Tracy Klarsfeld's child had problems in 3rd grade last year at Robert Down. There are a lot of boys spending time with the principal; there are children in the classroom that she does not want her son to be with. She wanted to know how many Robert Down students can move to Forest Grove.

Niccum asked Porras if, as the new superintendent, he was available to tackle this issue.

Porras responded that he has looked at reconfiguration studies and the conclusions are always the same. There are many positives to combined grades. There are issues with contracts and negotiations that would need to be addressed. The process could begin in a tiered fashion, a step at a time. He did meet and talk with Robert Down staff about a 4-5 combo, that he feels it is important to consider input from the teachers. The response from staff was not to move towards combo.

Mary Hiserman said she wished the situation could have been dealt with earlier, and suggested taking money from the emergency fund to bring in one 4th grade teacher or give an aide to the teacher to assist with the unique situation with these boys.

Bray asked why the larger classroom is not being used.

Bob Yonaska said "There are a certain amount of funds that have to be appropriated. If you appropriate for a 4th grade teacher, then you are potentially going to take money away from the High School. You have some very difficult decisions that you are going to have to make. As you start to figure out how to solve this problem, you know the band-aid is going to last for only so long and you will have to reapply another one." He acknowledged Bray for her unswerving passion for education, and complimented Porras for his energy, his intellect and his desire for Pacific Grove students to succeed. "Parents present at the meeting will be the ones doing the fundraising and the drivers throughout the rest of your children's school years. There are a certain group of parents that make that happen. As I've been stating for the last two years, this room needs to be filled every other Thursday. There are not enough parents in this district to make these things happen. The squeaky wheel gets the grease and when we bring these things to the attention of the school board...and we have a superintendent that responds to your email right away, calls you the same day when you call with an issue and will have that discussion with you...take advantage of that and make sure you keep driving the bus. My request is that you quickly go through these things, and find those band-aids. For those of you coming up through the program now, if you can talk to the other parents who are concerned with these issues and fill this room, it will solve a lot of the problems because you will find the solution for the school board and really help them make those decisions.

D. 2008/09 General Fund Budget Revision #1

Blakley said "What we are doing in this budget revision is bringing our estimate of revenue and expenses up to date. The first thing we are recommending is that we make the previously discussed adjustment in the property tax revenue projection which unfortunately is \$101,000 downward. We are also bringing in the information on whatever donations have come in on the revenue, and on the expenditure side, we are adjusting the salaries and benefits to reflect the current people who are now in those positions. In addressing increased fuel costs, we are trying to stay within the Transportation and Maintenance budget and just shift money. Whether we can get through the year with that sort of adjustment is questionable, but at least for now that's what we've done within those departments to buy the fuel and keep the department running. In reviewing utility cost, we found that last year our expenses were about \$80,000 more than we had in last year's budget. We are being advised to increase this year's budget by \$85,000. This is a projection and we hope it's not going to get any worse than that. It was noted that this is obviously a very negative situation we are in; it is more negative than anything the Board has addressed in the past fifteen years in which the only way we can have a balanced budget is to use the reserves and reduce those down in order to keep a positive number on the bottom line. We are still waiting on the County to close the 2007-08 books. We will then report the balances remaining. There will probably be one million dollars or more left over and we'll be reporting to you how much is categorical and most of it will be. Hopefully, this will allow us to restore those reserve amounts, and that has to happen. The mode we have to be in, at least in the short run, is that additional expenses, such as some of the things brought up this evening, can only be addressed by reducing something else because we don't have any extra money identified at this point."

MOTION Shammas/Sollecito to approve of the proposed budget revisions as presented.

Public comment:

Motion CARRIED 5 - 0

E. Citizens' Oversight Committee Appointments – Measure D

Blakley stated that the end of the two year appointments is coming up, and committee members must be reappointed. There are two vacancies as Julie Winslow has asked to withdraw and Dan Miller has resigned. Trustees agreed that they would like to replace them.

MOTION Bray/Sollecito to reappoint Alan Cohen, Mark Cameron, Carl Miller, Jim Quinn, Richard DeSaulles and Jennifer Jansen to two year terms on the Measure D Citizens' Oversight Committee and to solicit two additional members who reside within the Pacific Grove Unified School District and have business connections, if possible.

Public comment: none

Motion CARRIED 5 – 0

F Board Calendar/Future Meetings

Porras informed the Board of the scheduling conflict between the City Council/Trustees meeting on September 11th and Back to School Night at Forest Grove and the Middle School. The Board agreed to postpone the City/District meeting.

IX. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Subcommittee Reports

Community Human Services

Following discussion, Phillips agreed to serve as the district representative for six months.

City/District

Porras will continue to find a date for the City Council and School Board to meet.

ROP

(nothing to report)

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Discussion of Future Agenda Items

Review Open Campus – Jan 22nd
Music Program
Parcel Tax
Reconfiguration
Measure D projects

B. Future Agenda Items

September 4

Planning discussion for Joint Meeting – City Council and School Board

Joint Meeting – City Council and School Board

MOTION Bray/Shammas to cancel the previously scheduled September 11 meeting.

Public comment: none

Motion CARRIED 5 – 0

tba

Bell Schedule
Green District
Instructional Minutes/Instructional Day
Measure D Special Sessions

XI. ADJOURNED

9:55 p.m.