

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE
LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 6, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Long Beach Unified School District, County of Los Angeles, California, was held via teleconference on May 6, 2020.

Present: Members Benitez, Craighead, Kerr, Meyer, and Williams

Absent: None.

Call to Order

President Williams called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Closed Session

President Williams announced that the Board would be considering Items 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 as listed on the Closed Session agenda.

Call to Order

Having completed the Closed Session, President Williams called the Open Session meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Member Craighead.

Report of Closed Session

Brent North, legal counsel for the district, announced that the Board voted to approve a settlement agreement in case #1425-17/18, the terms of which provide for consideration and a release of all claims.

The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Public Hearing

None.

Call for Agenda Items/ Adopt Agenda

President Williams asked if Board Members had any items listed on the agenda for separate action.

It was moved by Member Benitez that the agenda be adopted as published.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Member Meyer that the minutes of April 1, 2020, April 6, 2020 and April 9, 2020 be approved as written.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Communications

None.

Hearing of Public Testimony

President Williams asked if there were any comments submitted on matters of school district business listed on the agenda.

No comments were submitted.

Staff Report

None.

Hearing of
Public
Testimony

President Williams asked if there were any comments submitted on matters of school district business not listed on the agenda.

Comments regarding the credit/no credit for this semester were received from the following:

Chad Ellis, parent
Kim Erkman, parent
Debbie Dobie, parent
Bill Ellis, grandparent
Stacy Johnson, parent
Alicia Deleray, parent
Josyln Semichy, parent
Elena Tadd, parent
Leann Ekstrom, parent
Carla Conrad, parent
Leslie Anderson, parent
Diane Babore, parent
Kelly Mehler, parent
Dove Mayo, parent
Laurie Dempsey, parent
Felipe Esparza, parent & teacher
Paul Anderson, parent
Janis Opie, grandparent
Ann Cantrell, parent
Riley Cantrell, student
Trina Rufo, parent
Todd Eckenrode, parent

Personnel

Member Meyer presented the Certificated and Classified Recommendations, prepared by the Deputy Superintendent of Education Services, Human Resource Services, and approved and recommended by the Superintendent.

It was moved by Member Meyer that the Certificated and Classified Recommendations of the Deputy Superintendent of Education Services, Human Resource Services, be approved and authorized.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Need for
Qualified
Educators

Member Craighead moved approval of the Declaration of Need for Fully Qualified Educators.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Instruction
Report

Member Benitez moved approval of the Instruction Report. He asked for information on the work that teachers are doing to make sure we keep advancing our students' education.

Pamela Seki, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum, thanked Dr. Benitez for the acknowledgement of how hard our teachers are working in this new environment. Teachers have participated in thousands of hours of professional development to learn how to innovatively use the G Suite applications. Teachers are also collaborating virtually with curriculum leaders. There is also a new program, called the Digital Mentor Program, in which our more technology savvy teachers have volunteered to mentor other teachers.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Finance
Report A

Member Kerr moved approval of the Finance Report A.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Finance
Report B

Member Craighead moved approval of the Finance Report B.

Member Kerr recused herself and stated that she has a potential financial interest under Government Code 1091 and 87100, as her husband works for a subcontractor who has done work for these payees.

The motion carried. Members Craighead, Benitez, Meyer and Williams participated in the roll call vote.

Business
Report

Member Benitez moved approval of the Business Report.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Purchasing
& Contracts
Report

Member Meyer moved approval of the Purchasing & Contracts Report.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Superin-
tendent's
Items

The Superintendent of Schools, presented the following recommendations:

1. That the Board of Education approve the Expulsion for Student # 479. This student would not be eligible to apply for readmission until January 2021.

Student
Discipline

However, Student Placement has made the recommendation for a suspended expulsion with an opportunity to attend another school within LBUSD.

It was moved by Member Kerr that Recommendation No. 1 of the Superintendent of Schools be approved and authorized.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Administrative
Assignments

2. That the Board of Education approve the Administrative Assignment as noted.

It was moved by Member Benitez that Recommendation No. 2 be approved and authorized.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Williams UCP
Report

3. That the Board of Education receive and file the Williams UCP Third Quarterly Report, which had no findings.

Unfinished
Business

None.

New
Business

Member Benitez moved approval of Board Policy 6142.1, High School Graduation Requirements.

BP 6142.1,
HS Graduation
Requirements

Superintendent Steinhauser stated that many districts are allowing flexibility for students graduating this year. Long Beach Unified is one of the few districts in the state of California that requires 220 credits for graduation. Staff recommends we suspend the requirement of 220 credits and allow students to meet at least the state minimum requirements, which are 130 credits. This is a safety net so that no student is harmed by the closure of schools.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Res. 050620-D,
Teacher
Appreciation
Week

Member Meyer moved approval of Resolution 050620-D, Supporting Teacher Appreciation Week.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

2020-21 Student
& Adult Meal
Prices

Member Craighead moved approval of Establishing Student and Adult Meal Prices for the 2020-2021 School Year.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Res. 050620-A,
Declaring Results
of Primary
Election Held
March 3, 2020

Member Meyer moved approval of Resolution 050620-A, Declaring the Results of the Primary Nominating Election Held on March 3, 2020 and Such Other Matters as Provided for by Law.

Member Benitez feels it is important to have conversations both at the state and local level in terms of the implications of the way the primary and general election

timelines are set up. The election cycle has an impact on school districts, given our budget and fiscal year decisions.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Res. 050620-B,
Calling for
General Municipal
Election on
November 3,
2020

Member Craighead moved approval of Resolution 050620-B, Proclaiming, Calling, Giving Notice of and Providing for the Holding of a General Municipal Election, Setting forth the Specifications of the Election Order, and Requesting Consolidation of Such Elections on the Third Day of November 2020.

Member Benitez stated that this is what he was alluding to in his previous comments, relating to the timeline of the elections, when the new board members would be sworn in and the date of the reorganization meeting.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Res. 050620-C,
Public Works
Projects

Member Kerr moved approval of Resolution 050620-C, Designating Specific Materials(s), Products(s), Thing(s), or Services (s) for Use on Public Works Projects Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 3400.

Yumi Takahashi, Chief Business & Financial Officer, stated that this resolution allows the district to obtain these materials from SALTO Systems, Inc. without going off a competitive bid, since this is to conduct a field test of the materials.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Annual
Organization
Meeting

Member Craighead moved approval of the Annual Organization Meeting.

Member Kerr noted that this is the discrepancy in the election cycle that Member Benitez was referring to.

Brent North, Legal Advisor, replied that with respect to 2021 or going forward, that is something that would need to be revisited once there is a change in the law, whether it's city charter law or California law. This resolution is based on the law that we have now. New board members would be sworn in in December, but the reorganization will take place on the third Monday of July with the annual organization elections for president and vice president, who will hold the term for one year.

Mr. North added that we are waiting for the results of some other litigation, dealing with voter participation rights act.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous with all five members participating in the roll call vote.

Report of
Board
Members

Member Craighead thanked everyone for their comments, and she appreciates that the comments were respectful and dignified.

Ms. Craighead thanked all of our teachers for working so hard and shared her participation at a couple of different schools for teacher appreciation week. It's so wonderful to see the emotion, it drives home the point that we are in a business where we work from the heart and we work with people. Classified employees week is coming up May 17-23, so once again, she appreciates all of our people and the work they do.

Member Meyer echoed Ms. Craighead's words. He is grateful to the staff, classified and certificated, and the work they are doing under these trying situations. He personally wanted to thank everyone at Multimedia Services for helping to convey our messages to the community.

Member Kerr also echoes the comments made. Long Beach Unified is the largest employer in the city and many of our employees are still working hard every day, it just looks a bit different. Be it the teachers, classified staff or the business departments, she continues to be grateful for all their work.

She knows that it can be unsettling and daunting to talk about what it might look like to begin to come back together. She is reminded at the end of the day that it is not just us in this, not just California or the United States, but that this is a global pandemic, and it stirs up emotions in many people. We are all doing this differently and we are all valuable, important and all are right for us.

Member Benitez wished a happy teacher appreciation week, the upcoming classified employee week and also, happy Asian Pacific Islander month. He thanked the staff at Nutrition Services and shared they have an awesome "Hero" program going on.

Dr. Benitez understands that some parents might be feeling frustrated with our distance learning and he encourages them to reach out for help. He also encourages other parents and community members that are more comfortable with the technology to reach out and lend a hand. We want to make sure that all of our students are engaged.

Member Benitez stated that being equitable always requires resources and we are going to have some tough times ahead of us. He encourages everyone to continue advocating for funding for education to our state and national legislators. Many of the decisions that the district is making are based on our district being fiscally healthy.

President Williams echoes the sentiments of his fellow board members, and also thanked the staff working on the messages and information getting out to the public.

Dr. Williams reflects back to 2008 when we had a massive layoff in this district and he wondered how this district would hold up in terms of its national profile of being a top performer. It was impressive to watch everyone come to the table and give their best. Today we are in a lot different circumstances and it appears to be more ominous, but he is quite sure that the spirit of this district will allow us to maintain that same focus and intensity. He and Member Kerr are part of the effort to advocate for locally controlled school funding relief at the state and federal level.

We have people who can rise to the occasion and wonderful leaders. Once again, thank you one and all who make this district what it is.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Steinhauser thanked the Board for honoring the staffs, and it is truly heart-warming to see what our staff is doing each and every day. He shared the successes of some of our schools, including CAMS being named the top high school in the state for the first time. Sato, in its sixth year of existence, was named a Project Lead the Way demonstration school, one of only 143 in the nation. 22 of our schools have been honored as Innovate Schools, which are schools focused on closing the achievement gaps.

Announcements

Member Benitez shared that Dr. Jay Camerino, Assistant Superintendent, High Schools, would be participating on a community forum panel the next day for the Latinx community members. They will be discussing all things COVID-19 related, including education.

Dr. Benitez also shared that he has been working on a teacher appreciation caravan around the Stevenson neighborhood. This will take place on Friday, May 8 at 1:00 p.m. He thanked the mayor's staff, and the fire and police departments for their participation.

President Williams stated that the Long Beach Health Department requested to form a partnership to have our students, particularly our students of color, involved as ambassadors, related to the way COVID-19 is impacting that community.

Dr. Jill Baker, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, added that Dr. Erin Simon, Director of Student Support Services, will be working with the Health Department on that. Students from the associated student bodies will be asked to share their lived experiences of COVID-19 using students' social media channels in order to have a positive impact on the reduction of COVID-19 in the African American community.

Member Kerr asked Deputy Superintendent Baker to share a timeline of when things might start to open up.

Dr. Baker replied that critical information will be shared with the community on May 8 regarding the summer programs and school district operations in the summer. Essential staff will be returned to the district for district work phasing over the next several weeks. We will also be working with our own providers for preschool essential service childcare and other experiences.

Mr. Steinhauser added that that Dr. Baker and Dr. Brown, Assistant Superintendent, School Support Services, are in constant contact with representatives of the health department.

The district is working with our city partners on what, if any, programs will be offered in the summer. We will inform everyone as soon as we get confirmation on what those programs might be, and what they might look like.

ADJOURNMENT

President Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Leticia Rodriguez
Assistant Secretary