

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

September 2, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Long Beach Unified School District, County of Los Angeles, California, was held on September 2, 2020.

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

Absent: None.

Call to Order

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

Closed Session

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

Call to Order

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

Report of Closed Session

President Craighead reported that the Governing Board had been meeting in Closed Session regarding matters listed on today's Closed Session agenda and wished to announce that no reportable actions were taken in Closed Session.

Public Hearing

President Craighead announced the Public Hearing Regarding the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan.

Learning Continuity & Attendance Plan

The following people spoke to the Hearing:
Tonia Reyes Uranga, parent
Mariela Salgado, parent
Kim Tabari, BLM LB
Jerlene Tatum, parent
Angelica Salazar, Children's Defense Fund

Emails were received and read from the following people:
Guillermina Cruz, Latinos in Action
Martha Cota, Latinos in Action
Juana Castellanos, Latinos in Action
Susana Luviano, Latinos in Action
Sarah Naccarato, parent
Anny Lara, Latinos in Action
Maria Zamudio, Latinos in Action
Ketty Cuba Tanaka, parent
Liliana Espinoza, Latinos in Action
Allison Kripp, parent

Robert Tagorda, Director, Equity Access, College & Career Readiness, thanked the public for their comments, which will be incorporated into the Plan. The Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan (LCP) is a new state requirement to address the ongoing need for the local education agencies to formally plan for the 2020-21 school year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative is aligned with the School Opening and Safety Plan, which highlights key information that is helpful to parents. The District's School Opening and Safety Plan is a localized version of what is required to be presented to the CA Department of Education (CDE) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) through the LCP.

Another initiative is the Budget Engagement Framework, which is an effort to ensure that stakeholders are engaged in various activities, not only to collect data and ideas towards the LCP but also budget efforts for the 2020-21 school year and future years. This Framework includes the Thought Exchange survey, the District & Community Stakeholder Groups and the Community Forums, which all give information to the Superintendent's Advisory Committee (SAC) so that the Board has feedback from all of our stakeholders.

Mr. Tagorda reviewed the timeline that has been followed to ensure that the LCP will be approved by the Board prior to the September 30 submission deadline to LACOE. As was noted by some community members who spoke, there is additional information yet to be included in the LCP, as feedback is still being collected from stakeholders. He also reviewed the main areas of the LCP and the District's efforts in those areas.

Dr. Jill Baker, Superintendent of Schools, acknowledged the many community members that have provided feedback and input into the LCP, as well as the staff in many departments who have worked on it. She expressed that the District values the community feedback and noted that a second hearing on the LCP will take place during the board meeting of September 16. An additional board meeting will also be scheduled in order to take action on the LCP prior to the September 30 deadline.

Call for
Agenda
Items/
Adopt
Agenda

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

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

Member Meyer asked that Item #24, Public Comment Procedure, be moved after Item #19.

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

Member Kerr asked that Item #21, Public Testimony on Items Not Listed on the Agenda, be moved before Item #20.

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

Approval
of
Minutes

It was moved by Member Williams that the minutes of August 19, 2020 be approved as written.

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

Communi-
cations

None.

Hearing of
Public
Testimony

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

Cesar Armendariz, educator, spoke regarding the equity policy.

Unfinished
Business

Public
Comment
Procedure

Chris Itson, Assistant Director, Marketing & Media Services, shared research on an alternate call-in option that would be effective and safe. The option is through the Microsoft exchange voicemail system, which integrates well with our current system, and this would allow the public to record a message that will be assigned to a specific email. These emails would then need to be sorted based on the time they were received and played during the board meeting. This could be labor intensive for staff and the cost of \$17,000 annually is also a factor to consider. In addition, anyone from anywhere in the world would have access, so this could possibly dilute the local community input.

A discussion ensued regarding the various options.

Member Kerr motioned to continue with in person public testimony and include an alternate call-in option during the pandemic time, or through the end of the school year. This would replace staff having to read the emails.

Brent North, Legal Counsel, noted that the Board needed to give direction to Staff on how to prioritize the public testimony received.

Member Kerr recommends that priority be given to the people who are present in person, then the phone calls.

Hearing of
Public
Testimony

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

Chett Davidson, CSEA, regarding flexible work space for classified staff
Viola Mae Bledsoe, CSEA, regarding flexible work space for classified staff
Mariela Salgado, parent, regarding distance learning
Noelle Salgado, student, regarding distance learning
Jerlene Tatum, parent, spoke on board member engagement
Leah Bleidistel, Educare/Head Start, regarding the MOU
Lisa Quihuiz, Educare/Head Start, regarding the MOU
Enrique Chavez, CSEA, regarding negotiations
Linda Hawes, parent, regarding distance learning
Gilbert Bonilla, Jr., CSEA, regarding classified employees
Cesar Armendariz, educator, spoke on equity

Staff Report

School
Opening
Update

Superintendent Baker stated that this School Opening update would have an emphasis on the launching of the virtual teaching and learning, with a focus on the teacher training. The selection of Canvas, the new learning system is an incredible investment for our district. 170 teachers have been trained to become trainers, which is an opportunity for us to build internal capacity.

Dr. Kristi Kahl, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Office, thanked the parents and the community for their patience and grace as we launched the virtual teaching and learning. It is very exciting to welcome our students to the virtual classrooms this year. She presented the perspectives of multiple offices and acknowledged the many hours of work and support from the Research Office. The staff at our schools have been helping parents and students connect to our systems and with technical support, while teachers have been supporting the students and their families over the telephone. And we now have a hotline for parents to call in for support. Additionally, parents are able to now pair with their student's Canvas accounts.

Dr. Kahl reminded everyone that daily attendance is now being taken, and as of the prior day, 61,000 students successfully logged into their accounts. This represents about 90% of elementary grade students and 81% of secondary grades students. Outreach efforts are under way to connect with the families that we haven't heard from.

Dr. Kahl also shared that teachers received 40 hours of training the prior week. She publicly thanked Nader Twal, Amy Pendray and Vanitha Chandrasekhar and the 27 staff members in OCIPD who wrote curriculum over the summer. There has been a lot of site collaboration and planning, and we are all still learning.

Nutrition
Services

Mark Chavez, Director, Nutrition Services Branch, shared an overview of their work since the pandemic started in March. Over 1 million meals have been served not only to our students, but also to the City's emergency operations center and our first responders, and three homeless shelters.

Nutrition Services has 450 employees and they operate with a budget of approximately \$36 million, so it is a very complex and large meal operation to operate. Thanks to the extension of the federal USDA program, they will be able to continue to serve breakfast, lunch and supper meals at sites that are eligible, based on their free and reduced percentage data. These meals will be offered to anyone that is 18 years and younger.

Mr. Chavez urged all parents to complete the meal application for the 2021 school year, as the waiver is only available through December 31. More importantly, the meal application not only drives meal application funding, but also the district level funding for the general fund. Also shared were safety protocols and steps taken to ensure that students, staff and visitors are safe. Staff and the management team have also developed appropriate training programs so that everyone is diligent in the safety protocols.

Personnel Member Williams 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 Williams 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 vote.

Instruction Report Member Meyer moved approval of the Instruction Report.

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

Finance Report A Member Meyer moved approval of the Finance Report A.

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

Finance Report B Member Williams 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. The vote passed 4-0-1 with Member Kerr abstaining.

Business Report Member Meyer moved approval of the Business Report.

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

Purchasing & Contracts Report Member Benitez moved approval of the Purchasing & Contracts Report.

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

Superintendent's Items None.

New Business Dr. Tiffany Brown, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, shared that she realizes that the reach into the community needs to be further and deeper than it is currently, and the effort is to plan things in a very intentional way. The district is talking about equity in the way that the student data is reviewed, in how we seek input for curriculum development, emotional and well-being supports, and how we are staffing and planning for recruitment. The idea that equity means everything is what we want to carry us forward. As some references are made to "All Means All", it sounds as if everyone should be receiving the same thing and that was

never the intention of our equity work. Our goal is to give more of what everyone is needing.

Dr. Brown shared a graphic that will be the process in how student and community input will be used in the decisions made around the development of both an equity leadership team and the equity policy. We will be tapping into the district committees that are already in place to build out towards the equity leadership team. This same process will be used to highlight the work being done around community engagement, with respect to equity. The goal is to organize the many efforts into one place so that we can all access them, with an ongoing hub of how it can efficiently be laid out.

In early October, a student thought exchange will be used to gather a wide range of input from the students, and she has already begun to get wonderful emails from students who want to be engaged. Student representatives will be selected to help with the development of the equity policy. Lastly, Dr. Brown is looking forward to a virtual student-led town hall meeting.

Report of
Board
Members

Member Williams is excited to hear about the Ethnic Studies courses in the middle school grades, and hopes eventually it can be expanded to the elementary grades. He thanked everyone for the phenomenal work done to overcome the many hurdles in order to get ready for another school year. From the teacher training, to the technical difficulties, it has been monumental work to engage our kids.

Member Benitez and Dr. Williams would like to request that an agenda item be added to the next meeting in support of Proposition 16, which would repeal section 31 of Article One of the California Constitution. Proposition 209 doesn't allow ethnicity as a factor in areas of employment and education, and it did a lot of damage to programs that were in place at the time.

Dr. Benitez added that it's a smooth transition from the equity conversation. In order to be equitable, we need to take social constructs like race, sex and national origin in explicit consideration, whether in our procurement or in our hiring.

Member Kerr shared that Californians for Justice held a Student Voice and Racial Equity Data Kick-off last week, where several of our students participated, sharing their student voice in equity work. She thanked Congresswoman Barragan, Mayor Garcia, Councilman Richardson, Dr. Chris Kelly and the CTA reps for the event at Jordan HS earlier that morning. We need to continue to advocate for continued federal funding support, as we will need more resources to serve our students well.

Ms. Kerr thanked the American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, Lena Serrano and Julie Morse, and is grateful to have them present.

Member Kerr stated that she was inspired to see the parents and community members in support of each other, in addition to the Staff. She thanked everyone for rallying together to help connect all of the students.

Member Meyer stated that he is in awe of what staff and the teachers do, and he shared a glimpse into the rigorous training offered last week to the teachers to make the distance learning experience effective. He offered heartfelt thanks to everyone for their hard work.

Mr. Meyer visited Lowell, Rogers and Wilson Schools on the first day of school and he had great conversations with the principals. He was amazed at the number of teachers who were teaching from their classrooms.

Member Benitez stated that we uphold equity through policy. Proposition 16 eliminates Prop 209, which is not equitable to the community we are trying to empower in Long Beach. The City of Long Beach launched their "Yes on Us" campaign which ensures a brighter future through an equity lens. Earlier in the week, a critical step was taken by re-examining the Long Beach Promise. He thanked Dr. Baker, Dr. Connolly, Dr. Bynum and Mayor Garcia for upholding the original intent and commitment of the Promise through a racial equity lens.

Dr. Benitez appreciates all the work by the district, in particular for our highest needs students. He thanked Dr. Erin Simon and Dr. Rachel Heenan of School Support Services, for joining a parent forum on Monday night, where mostly Spanish speaking parents who have children with disabilities participated. He also appreciates all the public comments and assured everyone that they are listening.

President Craighead appreciates all the heartfelt gratitude and comments shared by her fellow board members. She came across something at Stanford MS that resonated with her with the letters "GRACE", and if we all keep a little grace with us, we will be able to get through this.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Baker echoed the thanks to staff and teachers. It takes over 10,000 employees to make LBUSD work, and it has been a very hard working summer and last few weeks to get ready for Day One. This year it was different, but we are ready. She is reminded that we serve over 70,000 students and there is a very wide variation in their needs.

Dr. Baker shared that we are working with local officials to allow some of our schools to be used as voting centers. We recognize that voting is an important activity and we would like to cooperate as much as possible.

Lastly, Dr. Baker also thanked the community for their patience. It takes teamwork and that is the pride of the Long Beach family.

Announcements

None.

ADJOURNMENT

President Craighead adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Leticia Rodriguez
Assistant Secretary