

ADOPTED MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING - The special meeting of the Board of Education was held on the date and place mentioned above.

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- The meeting was called to order by President McMahon at 6:36 PM, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Tam

ABSENT: Spencer

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: Member Mooney

That the Board of Education adopt the agenda.

SECONDED: Member Tam

AYES: Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Tam

ABSENT: Spencer

MOTION CARRIED

COMMUNICATIONS - ORAL

None.

PUBLIC SESSION ITEM

Master Plan – Scenario #3: “How do we define and provide for a quality education in light of the funding challenges we face?”

Group Comments:

Magnet Schools

- Position ourselves as leaders in the district; attract federal money
- Provide creative models to gain more ADA
- Science/technology focus
- Be innovative
- Explore the state and federal funded programs with a language arts focus
- Would like to see pipeline programs that build throughout all levels of education
- See program choice and learning options created district-wide vs. site specific charters
- Language immersion
- Educate potential parents about the various elementary schools – sell them
- Performing arts magnet
- BRAVO academy model
- Attract proficient students from outside AUSD
- Dual immersion – arts, technology, performing arts
- Support magnet over charters

Charter Schools

- Driven grass-roots community effort
- Local charters – parents involved fill gaps for type of schools
- Can we give concerned community members organized opportunities to visit working diverse charters in neighboring cities? The only model Alameda knows is ACLC/NEa
- What is the difference between magnet and charter
- Charter with immersion programs
- Charter/magnet including arts
- Flexibility and increased ADA are positive, but what about the poorest students
- Decision should be made by organizers –any kind of charter that works for them
- Based on philosophy of education – more freedom for charters
- Not opposed, but very wary
- ACLC has “10” score, but uses Encinal AP teachers to teach students
- If it’s the last resort
- Charters aren’t good for public education long-term
- Charters put disadvantaged students and families at a greater disadvantage

Restructure District Office

- If it makes sense and saves money
- Appreciate the continuing effort to implement best practices and create accountability
- Outsource administrative functions like hiring/payroll, facilities management to private firms or look to pool these functions with other districts or the county to save money
- I imagine more streamlining could be done
- Don’t change things that actually work
- I think the District is as lean as it can get
- Computerize all school orientation every year – could be done online including record keeping, attendance, etc.
- AUSD offices already much less top heavy than before – I trust you are doing the best you can

Reduce Cost in Response to State Budget Cuts

- What would be cost savings of returning to the AM/PM K model? This could relieve the overcrowding at some elementary schools
- Increase class sizes
- Formalize volunteer assistance for Art and Music
- Exit strategy for better time and reintroduction of lost programs
- Every parent contributes volunteer hours and/or money to help support programs
- Would changing secondary education and grade structures save funds or use facilities more efficiently?
- Sell/develop land where Island High used to be
- Reduce costs for special needs students
- Decisions should be made based on our goals rather than reactionary
- Work within our means
- Live within the money we have – future cuts should be across the board
- Administrative overhead reduction
- What is left to cut?

Define and Prioritize Essential Programs

- Music and Art are essential
- What are existing programs and where?
- We need to work on attendance numbers
- Variety has to be provided to appeal to different learning styles, interests, and abilities
- What are the essential programs?
- Programs for “bright” kids to keep them in public schools and keep them interested in learning
- Universal preschool
- AP courses, music, art, drama, languages
- Stronger science
- Math, science, language arts were cut enough
- I do not want art fighting with science

Parcel Tax

- Provide comparison between what is provided now vs. in the 60’s, and 70’s
- Very difficult with lawsuit and overall distrust
- Important to help business and landowners without children understand how valuable our schools are to the community
- We are barely past Measure H – how are we going to handle another parcel tax?
- Celebrate what we have all the time – sell our schools!
- Start promoting the excellent learning happening in AUSD
- Align master plan goals so that the community understands what they are buying with their investment
- The tax needs to be structured to align best with selling it to the voters
- Direct cost connected to programs so people know what they are paying for
- Needs to be initiated by the community, not AUSD
- More focus on what we are doing well
- Public education campaign good suggestion
- We need to realize these kids will be running the city in the future!

Listening Campaign Questions/Suggestions

- Conduct topic-oriented discussion instead of Q&A that goes all over
- Include financial summary at every meeting
- We need to get input, not just feedback
- Leverage core competencies
- Gather information about community strengths
- Start house parties now!
- Find a way to provide light snacks and entertainment
- Go after stimulus funding, city redevelopment funds
- Respect for all diversity in Alameda, especially regarding LGBT curriculum
- Satisfied with Master Plan process to date
- How are we going to fill education gap?
- Change boundaries, greater enrollment, look at facilities
- Appreciate efforts to hold listening campaigns
- Pleased to hear that new avenues and locations and partners are being developed to get more input

Board Member Comments

- Transparency is a given and should be underlying everything – remove from list
- “Roadshow” at each school site; maybe use back-to-school as opportunity to talk about Master Plan
- Share “good news” stories with the public
- Follow-up on reaching out to preschools regarding the educational programs we have to offer
- Can we have small groups at future Board workshops?
- Look at grade configuration, consolidation, and restructuring
- We need to be clear on PI status and how students are affected
- What different programs are offered at the various school sites?
- Consider a magnet on the west end – can we sustain it? We need to understand the fiscal reality
- Facilities Plan needs to be clear about the projected usage
- Is there any flexibility in class size?
- Consider fewer school days
- Parcel tax
- Flexible use of space
- Online surveys – what are your priorities? What is the real impact of interdistrict students? We need fact-based data rather than perception or innuendo
- Preschool for profit

ADJOURNMENT

President McMahon adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.