

Laguna Beach Unified School District

Board of Education Minutes of Special Meeting June 19, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Laguna Beach High School Library.

Roll Call to Establish Quorum

Roll call to establish Quorum:

Members Present: Jan Vickers
 Dee Perry
 Ketta Brown
 Carol Normandin
 Peggy Wolff

Staff Present: Jason Vilorio, Ed.D., Superintendent
 Alysia Odipo, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
 Leisa Winston, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources/Public
 Communications
 Jeff Dixon, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
 Victoria Webber, Executive Assistant
 Irene White, Director, Special Education
 Michael Keller, Ed.D., Director, Social Emotional Support
 Mike Morrison, Chief Technology Officer
 Ryan Zajda, Director, Facilities
 Chris Duddy, Principal, El Morro Elementary
 Mike Conlon, Principal, Top of the World Elementary
 Jenny Salberg, Principal, Thurston Middle School
 Jason Allemann, Ed.D., Principal, Laguna Beach High School

Pledge of Allegiance

President Vickers led the Board, staff, and members of the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Brown moved adoption of the agenda. Member Normandin seconded.

Discussion: None

Motion 5-0. Members Vickers, Perry, Brown, Normandin, and Wolff voted yes to adopt the agenda.

Public Comment (Items Not on the Agenda)

None.

Information Item

Review of Survey Results from Students, Staff, and Parents Regarding the 2019-2020 Student Instructional Calendar

Dr. Viloría and Mrs. Winston provided an overview of the April 12, 2018 Study Session, the frequently asked questions, and presented the survey results for the 2019-2020 student instructional year.

The following people spoke in opposition of the proposed calendar change:

- Mr. John Morreale was disappointed in the survey and believed the questions were limited. Wanted more parent involvement in writing the survey and the ability for more than one person to take the survey from the same email address. Commented on the lack of qualitative questions on the survey.
- Ms. Danielle Roedersheimer was disappointed in the survey. Understands the pressure students are under but believes parents and staff should not feed into the pressures. Suggested changing the semester without changing the calendar and/or phasing the change in over time.
- Ms. Susan Bond did not believe there was enough data. If student pass rates on AP exams are 95-97%, why move the calendar. She felt the presentation was one sided.
- Ms. Lisa Williams did not believe a majority supported the proposed change. She supports her children having fun in the summer and believes children would not be able to work at the Pageant or Festival if the calendar were changed. Believes the request is a special interest for high school students only.
- Mr. Kevin Harrison stated people feel threatened and the proposed change is being pushed on people. Fall sports is not a good reason to change. Thanksgiving break does not need to be a full week. The semester does not need to end before winter break. Additional preparation time for AP exams is not a good reason. A calendar change is being presented to meet the needs of 10% of the students.
- Ms. Wendy Offield stated the town and mindset of Laguna Beach are different than others. Students are trending toward taking too many AP classes.

Member Brown moved to extend time on the discussion. Member Normandin seconded. Motion carried 5-0, all members voted yes.

The following people spoke in opposition of the proposed calendar change:

- Mr. Mike Sweeney stated AP courses did not help his daughter and less pressure on her would have been more helpful. He also commented on participation in the Festival and Pageant as important aspects of the summer.
- Ms. Anita Mangels spoke on behalf of the Festival of Arts/Pageant of the Masters stating the Festival and Pageant would lose volunteers and students volunteer hours may not count if they cannot work the entire time. She also stated scholarships for LBHS students would be at risk if they could not complete volunteer hours at the Festival or Pageant.
- Mr. Mark Kellam stated he does not want his students in school during the Festivals. Concerned about students riding busses longer and increased traffic due to busses on the roads.
- Mr. Clay Leeds believed survey questions were tilted and voiced traffic concerns.
- Mrs. Mary Blanton, elementary teacher, stated the unique needs of elementary students were not considered. Kinder students need several months of school without a holiday to get into a routine. A full week is not needed at Thanksgiving and ending semester at winter break is not needed.
- Ms. Jamie Jameson, elementary teacher, commented the proposed change really equates to only three additional days for students. She asked if there would be more homework assigned during the Thanksgiving break and believed the survey was presented with the biased perspective of the calendar committee.
- Ms. Ann Morreale commented on fall sports not being a good reason for the proposed change. She believes there is a lot of wasted time in classrooms and that the semester could end prior to winter break without a calendar change and there is no need for a longer break at Thanksgiving.
- Dr. Nora Evans believes there is more negative impact on families with the proposed calendar change then benefit to students.
- Ms. Kathleen Fay asked for information on the outreach to other organizations.
- Ms. Kris Hansen suggested time be taken from Thanksgiving week and mid-winter break to adjust the calendar.

The following people spoke in support of the proposed calendar change:

- Ms. Dawn Hunnicutt spoke on behalf of 40 LBHS teachers who support for the following reasons:
 - College and Career Advantage classes would align with other districts (affects 131 students)
 - Athletic leagues start earlier (affects 375 students)
 - Community college summer classes start earlier and dual enrollment may increase
 - Senior transcripts would be ready on time. Currently, LBHS cannot meet the July 1 deadline for colleges and submits late
 - AP students would receive more instructional time with teacher prior to tests
 - First semester coursework would be complete prior to winter break
 - Senior students would be able to attend college orientations and experience internships that are starting prior to LBHS end date
 - These teachers believe this option best serves

- Ms. Amy Hundhausen believes finishing the semester before winter break is important. 54% of students who took the survey support and she believes student voice is important and should be listened to. Has heard support voiced from other parents.
- Ms. Kristen Cowles, LBHS Teacher, believes the proposed calendar change is best for students.
- Ms. Kirsten Warner, believes the semester finishing before winter break is very important to give students a true break. Believes the change should be made to do what's best for students, not family vacations.

At the conclusion of public comment, Dr. Viloría commented on the following statements:

In response to other community groups, staff reached out to the Sawdust/Festival of Arts and the Boys and Girls Club and requested information on student attendance data. No response was received from the Festivals regarding the number of student workers. Staff was able to confirm that volunteer hours do not need to be completed at the Festival to receive scholarships. We have not received any data regarding attendance rates at the Festival during the last three weeks over the last three years.

Information from the Pam Estes, Director of the Boys and Girls Club confirmed that they are open during Thanksgiving week and last year, 47 students from Capistrano Unified attended during Thanksgiving. It was also reiterated that the club would adjust to any changes to the academic calendar and only asked that they be given ample time to prepare.

Board Member Comments/Discussion:

Member Wolff stated she served as a member of the calendar committee. She believes it is good practice to reflect on what we do and how we do it. She read the District mission statement. She stated the calendar committee addressed the instructional year and that there 17 weeks are the minimum to qualify as a semester. The calendar committee based their recommendation on a child's educational experience.

Member Normandin had questions regarding what is meant by a qualifying semester. Dr. Viloría explained that there are very few semester only classes offered and that there is not education code requirement for a minimum number of days for a semester.

She also asked if more students would participate in AP classes if there were less summer homework. Dr. Viloría stated that teachers have been asked if adjustments would be made to summer assignments if the proposed calendar were to be adopted, and the majority of them responded yes.

Member Normandin commented on the Stanford program, "Challenge of Successful Schools," and one step in the process in adjusting the school calendar to better meet the needs of students.

Member Brown reiterated no decision had been made on the proposed change. She stated that the survey was produced and based on the frequently asked questions from the April 12 Study Session. Member Brown stated students are the end users, and decisions made affect them the most. The Board is not pushing an agenda, but was asked by the certificated bargaining unit to review the calendar. LBUSD has the largest number of students attending College and Career Advantage courses, and those courses start August 21. Member Brown requested Superintendent reach out to the Festivals again to obtain more data and asked if there was a way to get eight full days for students.

Clerk Perry stated there are compelling reasons to end by the second week of June, including internships, college orientations, summer jobs, and transcripts. She asked if the winter break could ensure no homework. She noted summer is important to families and suggested a compromise of starting the last full week of August and taking days from elsewhere on the calendar to keep a dismissal of the second week of June.

President Vickers was a member of the Calendar Committee. She shared the committee spend a lot of time and work in considering many recommendations. She noted that the number one priority from respondents of the survey was ending the trimester before winter break. In response to why this meeting was held on June 19, President Vickers stated it was decided to be held before school ended to ensure people were still in town. In response to comments regarding the beaches and the weather, history has shown that the prime time for Laguna Beach residents is September and October, when the weather is great and fewer visitors are in town. She responded to the concerns regarding students on busses by stating all busses are new, air conditioned, have seat belts, and are powered by natural gas. She stated lifeguards are starting employment earlier to accommodate the new summer schedule by other school districts.

She asked if the calendar could be worked out to provide eight solid instructional days.

Dr. Vioria clarified the Board requests to include the preparation of an additional proposed calendar for review that would include a start date of August 26, maintain a three-day Thanksgiving break, focus on the first semester ending at winter break and ending by the second week of June. One of the goals is to provide AP students with more instructional days and fewer days after AP testing is completed.

Dr. Vioria responded to comments from speakers noting the following:

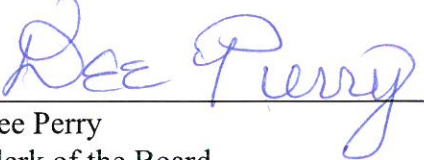
- AP pass rate for LBUSD students is 85-95%
- 15-20% of student drop AP courses every year
- AP teachers were surveyed and 7 of 10 would reduce or eliminate summer assignments, of the 3 who did not, 1 does not have an assignment and the average assignment for the remaining 2 was 6 hours or less.
- City representation was included on the Calendar Committee and information regarding city changes to trolleys and lifeguards are included on the FAQ website
- Student work permits are required of students under the age of 18 so those students over the age of 18 are not required to obtain one.

This topic will be brought back as an information item on the July 17, 2018 Board agenda.

Member Brown moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Normandin seconded.

Discussion: None

Motion carried 5-0. Members Vickers, Perry, Brown, and Wolff, voted yes to adjourn at 8:04 p.m.


Dee Perry
Clerk of the Board
July 17, 2018