

Gilroy Unified School District
 SUPERINTENDENT'S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
 (SPAC) Meeting Minutes
 Monday, February 3, 2020
 6:30 – 8:30 P.M.

Members in attendance

Joaquina Soulia (El Roble)	Melissa Avila-Carroll (GECA)	Christina Martinez (Gilroy)	Alexandria Dominguez (Glen View)
Rachelle Castaneda (Las Animas)	Lauren Moller (Luigi Aprea)	Lindsay Millea (Rod Kelley)	Adrienne Rodriguez (Rod Kelley)
Charity Kay (Rucker)	Kim Dewitt (Solorsano)	James Pace (Board Member)	

Welcome & Introductions

- Dr. Flores began by introducing Anna Pulido, Director of Student Services, who gave the presentation on special education/student services.

Tonight's Topics: Special Education

- Mrs. Pulido shared a presentation with the SPAC members regarding Special Education and the Student Services Department.
- She provides a status report twice a year to the Governing Board in November and in June.
- Despite the decrease in enrollment in the District, there has been an increase in the special education population.
- In November 2019, there was an increase of 100 students from the prior year.
- Part of the increase can be attributed to bringing back students who were being served in other settings outside the District and transitioning them back into GUSD schools.
- In the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA), which includes 12 districts. The same increase has been seen.
- The student services department is trying to serve as many students as possible within district programs. Last year, some of the most severe students attended a county program.
- At the end of February, two classes that are SCCOE programs are moving to Gilroy High School. These classes will be county operated but housed on a District campus.
- The District has seen an increase in the following:
 Speech – language impaired from 383 in June 2017 to 444 in November 2019.
 Emotionally disturbed from 46 in June 2017 to 59 in November 2019.
 Other Health Impaired from 159 in June 2017 to 187 in November 2019.
 Specific learning disability from 487 in June 2017 to 592 in November 2019.
 Autism from 155 in June 2017 to 178 in November 2019.
- The department is reviewing how students are being served. One of the department's goals, is to work with preparing students in self-contained classes and staff and parents to provide more mainstreaming opportunities.
- There is Parents-helping-parents here in Gilroy; the district is working with them, not only to take advantage of professional development, conferences and presentations they provide, but also to include them in GUSDs.

- Staff in partnership with Parents-helping- parents would like to work with SELPA and create a Parent Advisory Group, with Morgan Hill Unified.
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) is a training for staff for when students are having a behavior emergency; training them in strategies on how to de-escalate students. This year, three staff (two program administrators and one behavior specialist); went to Sacramento and became certified to train other staff on TCI.
- The district has purchased a social emotional curriculum for both general & special education, for implementing in the therapeutic classrooms. Also, starting next month, offering, social emotional groups, for any student that may be suffering from mental health issues. They can participate through a referral from an administrator.
- Every professional development day the district has had this year, the student services department has provided training to special education teachers as well as general education teachers.
- Residential placements- students that have severe emotional needs. Over the last few years, the district has been able to transition students back to the district and sustain students within district programs. This is the most expensive placement. Some of these programs are not in California, they are typically out of state.
- Non- public schools (NPS), serve students that the district is unable to meet their needs. There are students that do need that level of services.
- Whenever the district has a student that meets eligibility, the goal is to keep them in general education as much as possible; some students are only pulled out for part of the day.
- Staffing - over the last few years the number of staff needed from outside agencies has decreased. In 2018, the district contracted for 11 and in 2019 that number was down to 3.
- When the district has to use outside agency staff there is high turn over and it is also hard to build consistency with students, which is what they need. Contracted agency staff are more expensive.
- The district operates therapeutic classrooms for emotionally disturbed students at two classrooms at Glen View, one at Brownell, one at Solorano and one at each high school.
- Dr. Flores said when the Federal Government passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), they said they would fund this program, and today they contribute less than 20% for the cost of special education. The State contributes some. The bottom line is the impact on the district's budget is a \$15 million encroachment, which our general fund has to pick up. This has steadily increased from year to year.

Q: What is the district doing for recruitment?

A: Some of it is word of mouth, the district has had some teachers from down south come this way. Paul Winslow, our Assistant Superintendent of HR has done a great job, staff goes even out of State and have attended recruitment events all over the State e.g. San Jose State, San Francisco State, and Chico to recruit. Last year GUSD hired three-speech and language therapist out of Chico. When Mr. Winslow came to the district office, the first year, the district had 15 sped vacancies. This past year, there were less than a third of that. The recruitment

efforts are really paying off; however, the problem is people are not going into special education. The pool is so limited and everyone is scrambling for the same people.

- Dr. Flores and Mr. Winslow met with four staff from San Jose State recently, one of which was from the special education department. GUSD is looking at increasing the partnership with SJSU, for instance taking interns and student teachers from those programs. The district is looking at everything they can. Staff went out of state last year, which did not work. Staff is really targeting where we are recruiting now, for instance Chico has a program that GUSD looks at.
- Mrs. Pulido said with special-language and occupational therapy, GUSD has MOUs with some of the surrounding colleges, to allow them to do field work, also with San Francisco State, San Jose State, and a couple of others. Just last year one of the people who did field work stayed with GUSD.
- Dr. Flores said all the districts are having this problem of finding special ed. staff not just in California. This is the reason the district contracts with outside agencies. It is getting better and GUSD is contracting less and less.

Q: Is there any type of collaborative with special education agencies that would be within the county that are able to hire, and then feed out to the district?

A: The County Office is the biggest employer and they have many vacancies. What may help us is declining enrollment as more and more districts are getting smaller and eventually will make people available. GUSD is going to apply for a grant with San Jose State, where teachers get \$10,000 as an incentive to go into a special education program, (April).

- Mrs. Pulido said the last two years, Mr. Winslow recommended that the district have a signing bonus to help recruit. The district hired a speech and language therapist and a psychologist. The district has hired on three teachers, all natives of Gilroy.
- Dr. Flores said San Jose State is interested in recruiting local people that want to stay here.

Q: You mentioned a social emotional curriculum what is the name of that program?

A: Has the name STEP in it, there is two different ones (will send it).

- Dr. Flores said for students to be identified for the therapeutic programs, they have to be identified through an assessment process as emotionally disturbed. It is a small population. There are close to 18 at Glen View, at each middle school there are about eight and two high school programs there.

Q: What other supports or what things would make your job (Director of Student Services) in this district an ideal situation for students with special needs?

A: More money, additional staff, also to get the message out about the inclusion opportunities. The two pathways are diploma or certificate of completion. Students that are not on a certificate of completion are out in at least electives. The message is getting out there.

- Dr. Flores said, the district does not allow outside agencies to provide services through any other funding source. If they are on district campuses and working with district students, the service needs to be identified through the Individual Education Plan (IEP), and be funded by the district.

Q: How long does it take, to identify a student? What does the process look like?

A: If it is a student that does not already qualify for services, the answer to a request for assessment or SST recommendation for assessment is presented within 15 days. The answer could be either a denial or an assessment plan could be presented. Once an assessment plan is signed, the District has 60 days to assess the student and determine if they are eligible and offer services. If it is a student that already has an IEP, the team meets annually. Every three years, the staff re-evaluates the student to determine if the student still meets eligibility for services under an IEP. Once a student meets eligibility for services, if a parent requests an IEP meeting, the district has 30 days from the time of the request to schedule an IEP meeting. If a student receives services under an IEP and parents have concerns, they should request a meeting through the case manager and within 30 days a meeting will be scheduled.

- D. Flores said parents should write Students Services a memo or even a hand written letter, saying they are requesting the child to be assessed.

Q: If a parent request an assessment/services, what is that process?

A: Sometimes parents send letters directly to Mrs. Pulido's office, or sometimes to the school, and the school will forward it to the Student Services office. The Coordinator, Ms. Trisha Green oversees this process. Depending on the information, provided or available - if they are going to approve the parent request, it goes to the school psychologist. If they are going to deny the request, the parent will receive a written answer from Mrs. Pulido's office (Student Services).

- Sometimes when a parent request is received, staff will call the parent. If the parent is asking for an assessment and staff are producing an assessment plan that does not mean they are necessarily going to qualify, staff schedule a Student Study Team (SST) simultaneously. If they do not qualify, staff should be looking at interventions, because not all students that are assessed are going to qualify. They still may be struggling, and staff have to look at other options. This year, the district has an Intervention and Enrichment Administrator (Adelina Cervero). Mrs. Cervero oversees interventions and is working with the schools to look at how they are implementing the SST.
- Dr. Flores said this is all in the law. The district is required to try interventions first before a teacher can refer a student. There is good reasons for that because otherwise everyone turns to special education and that is why the process is so prescriptive. It should lead to identifying students that meet one of the eligibility categories. The idea is to intervene early and there should be SST meetings with parents before there is a referral to special education and then they look at things that have been discussed at SST meetings, the strategies and interventions that have been tried.
- Mrs. Pulido said there are many different things that staff would look at very closely, those would be factors and it might be a disability or attributed to other factors that need to be addressed.

Q: Does funding through the district carry over if the student goes to a junior college if they have an IEP?

A: No. Once the student graduates and receives a diploma, the services will occur at the community college. Community colleges have support services for adults that have disabilities. Once they receive a diploma they are done with district

services, however, the most serious handicapped students may stay with us until they are 22 if they do not earn a diploma – the district can continue to provide services.

- Mrs. Pulido said if they graduate with a diploma, the IEP goes with them. They can take it to the college, but there is no funding. Even if they have an IEP, it turns more into a 504 plan with accommodations. There is a little bit more help at state colleges or public colleges as opposed to private universities/college.
- The Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ends when they get their diploma. A very small percentage of students continue with the district until they are 22.

Superintendent's Report

Birth rate data & impact on declining enrollment

- Dr. Flores shared a handout with the SPAC members (Updated data on historical birth chart). This information was received from the district's demographer a couple of weeks ago.
- One of the biggest reasons for the decline is that birthrates are at a 100-year low in California, and a 32 year low in the nation.
- At one point, GUSD had over 1000 births back in 2006 and about 85% of those births would show up in kindergarten.
- This year's kinder class which is from births five years ago-there were 857 births and 710 kindergartners showed up this fall. If you apply that 83% to 778-five years from now we will have 638 kindergartners.
- The district is going to continue to get smaller. Right now it is at the elementary level, and the district has taken steps to address that by closing ADB.
- Another thing that Dr. Flores has mentioned to the SPAC members before is the Students Generation Rate, coming out of housing which is lower and out-migration-, people cannot afford to live here. The district will continue to decline at a pretty fast rate. 25 districts in the county are declining and some at a very fast rate.

Q: Do we know how many schools that would equate us to at the elementary level?

A: The district had eight (8) very full schools when Dr. Flores began in 2007. It reached a peak in 2008, and then started to decline. There were schools that had no room; schools were very full, all these indicators have really changed. The birth rate started to decline about six years ago. If you look at birth rate for the County, it parallels GUSD.

- Dr. Flores was at the Santa Clara County Office of Education, State of Education and, they shared how the decline county wide- it is over 10,000 over the last five (5) years and they are predicting another 10,000 in the next five (5) years.
- Down the road, the district may have to look at closing another elementary school. Some schools are holding, but when you look at projections they are going to have to be adjusted because of this decline. The biggest schools will also be declining.

Q: Seeing that you have data looking out, is that your responsibility in collaboration with the school board to be planning for that, or is it waiting and reacting?

A: The data is shared with the Board when it is received. It is staff's job to report it to the Board, and then at some point a recommendation is made. When it declines at that level the Superintendent will make a recommendation to the

board of forming a committee to close a school. This is monitored every month (all the time).

- Every time the district loses 100 students, they lose a lot of money; the district cannot continue to operate at the same level, with a lot less funding.
- Q:** Special day class and transitional kinder (TK) classes of ADB, where are they going to be?
- A:** TK has not been announced yet. The SDC classes are moving to Las Animas. This was announced to the staff and parents have been informed. All Parents at ADB have been sent a letter with a map of the new attendance areas.
- Q:** At the first meeting, we received all the information about declining birth rate, how is it being translated to the rest of the parents who are not part of this group?
- A:** Staff will not start talking about closing another school yet because anything could happen. Staff cannot predict the future. If the steady decline continues the district may look at another school closure, and will do exactly what we did this time. Staff will send out information like before and get information to the Principals. The district had information on the website, etc. It seemed to go pretty well. The process took a whole year. Staff placed the information on school board agendas. The good thing about closing ADB is staff estimated the savings would be approximately \$750,000 but it is going to be over a \$1 million. Also the district is in negotiations about a joint lease agreement with two parties. The income from the lease would be in addition to the savings from closing the school. It is required by law that this topic be discussed in closed session. The two parties are the Santa Clara County Office of Education and Pacific Christian School. Ultimately, it is the Board of Education's decision. We are optimistic about the negotiations. Again this revenue will be on top of the \$1 million in savings from closing the school.
- About a month from now, the decision will be made as to where the staff is moving. Around March 6, all vacant positions in the district will be posted. ADB staff will be given first choice by seniority. Positions for the classified staff have already been identified for next year, and the principal, Mrs. Codiga was appointed to Las Animas. The district will not be laying anyone off.

Governor's January budget proposal

- Dr. Flores shared a handout which highlighted the funding for education that was released on January 10th by the Governor in his 2020-21 budget proposal.
- A lot of the new dollars for education are one-time funds. While the district appreciates one-time funds for these kinds of programs (shared on the handout) would rather see this in ongoing funding.
- The COLA (cost of living adjustment) barely covers the normal increases in operations, such as pensions which it is barely going to cover.
- There is not enough in the general fund, which is where the district needs the funding to be.
- At the beginning of the year in January, the Governor releases the budget proposal and in May he releases is what is called the May Revise; the legislature has to approve the budget by the middle of June.

Coronavirus - Public Health notices

- This information is being shared on the GUSD website.

- Our source of information is the Public Health Department (PHD). The district is not going to rely on any other source. The PHD is working with the CDC, and receiving daily updates.
- GUSD will release information such as the letter included in the packet that was sent out today with the most up-to-date information available. This is what the district is posting and sending out periodically.
- Right now, the Public Health Department is saying, there is no risk to the public health in our County. The two cases that have been identified are self-contained.
- The PDH is reinforcing good hygiene practices that we all should be following. Many people are sick; with the common cold, flu, etc., we do need to practice good hygiene practices all the time.
- We heard from the Sherriff that there are two cases in San Benito County.

Brownell updates

- The Brownell buildings will start arriving Tuesday of next week (Feb. 11), very early in the morning.
- Within a month, all of the 7th and 8th grade buildings will be installed as well as the administration building.
- By the first week of August, the buildings will be ready to go.
- Once the first phase is completed, staff will be moving over this summer into every space available.

Q: Will these pods be separated by grade level or by department?

A: Yes, by grade level. Dr. Flores will have to ask the Principal regarding placements of departments. What is great about the pods, is that they are self-contained, they have roll up doors and interior quads for each of the grade levels.

- The project is beautiful.

GHS pool updates

- Dr. Flores and members of the Facilities Subcommittee went to see the progress of the pool on Friday. It is moving along and will be done by this summer. It is framed and the cement will be poured. It is a big pool with a very deep end as well as a non-deep end for beginning swimmers, many practice lanes, nice new deck, and all new equipment.
- This pool will be much more energy efficient with new equipment.

Principal leaves/retirements

- Silvia Reyes, who is the Principal at Las Animas has retired.
- Scott Otteson will retire at the end of the school year, after many years at El Roble.
- Dr. Flores sent out a letter to parents regarding Gilroy High School Principal. Martin Enriquez, the principal, is on leave. Dr. Flores will provide updates as she can. In the letter mailed to the GHS parents, it outlined a plan, for the interim which includes bringing in a retired principal to help, along with the two assistant principals and the whole district office team is helping as well.

Run for Fitness

- Dr. Flores said she hopes many students are going to participate. The event is on March 14th.
- Teachers are involved in a training program at the site. They are starting to walk & run and are getting ready.

- It is not just about the day of the event, it is also about getting them to train and hopefully make it a habit.

Additional Q & A:

Q: The school site purchased many chromebooks, noticed the new ones are coming in, where is this funding coming from?

A: A big chunk is coming from the district, and some from the school sites.

Q: When will we the students get back to the one-to-one of chromebooks?

A: The district cannot get the sites to the on-to-one. Dr. Flores said she will have Maribel Guizar, Director of Information Technology to come and speak to the SPAC members regarding this.

- Dr. Flores added that from the very beginning staff said most of these chromebooks are not going to last more than 5-6 years.

SPAC Representative Reports

Rucker

- Friendship wall with kid's handprints on wall Friday 2/5.
- 125th celebration 4/18, in the next few weeks, they will pre order for shirts and tiles.
- The board is between 125 focused on issues that popped up with multi-purpose room regarding the theater PA system, have gotten many quotes and will be cutting a check to Rucker for the system.
- Royal Dance Academy coming back Monday and Tuesdays of March, with a performance at the end.

Rod Kelley

- So much fundraising.
- Goodwill donation made over \$200.
- Mt. Mikes.
- Chuck e cheese made over \$900.
- Still getting totals of winter wonderland and poinsettias.
- Now in the process of mixed bag fundraiser.
- More to come - sees candies, etc.
- Two spirit days in January which was crazy/mis-matched day and a cultural day this past Friday 1/31.
- Kindergartners did 100th day of school dressed up like they were 100 years old.
- Glow dance this Friday 2/7.
- Talent show in March.
- Rod Kelley Gala 3/27 at Old City Hall.
- Mrs. Salcido had gone over a lot of the technology, all the kids have chromebooks that is largely due to our parent club, all this fundraising has come in handy. Presented technology to ELAC and HSC, looking at making some adjustment some of the software is not working, she is on top of that tech wise.

Solorsano

- Awards Assembly at the end of January, 97 students made it on the principal's list, 359 made the honor roll and 89 had perfect attendance.
- Finished kindness week last week.
- Did Blackout Bingo, going to do a raffle with the students who competed in Blackout Bingo, for an Amazon fire tablet.

- This weekend on Saturday handful competed in Math Olympia in Morgan Hill, a seventh grader made it to top 12.
- Having vaping assembly next week.
- Have pilot program with Star Video right now three days a week starting last week.
- Just wrote a grant for next year, hopefully having a student store, where students will get tickets for good citizenship and they can turn in tickets to the store for Solorsano merchandise.

Las Animas

- Lots of transition changes taking place with new principal, who is visiting now.
- Having our annual sweetheart dance on Friday 2/7, snacks, photo booth, DJ.
- Planning for 12th annual auction roaring 20s 5/1.
- Spirit week last week, 49ers dress up day, 100 days of school, walk to school day, pajama day.

Glen View

- Valentines gram.
- Smelly pencils.
- Movie night this Friday 2/7.
- After school sales, best funding.
- Sport day 2/3.
- One teacher received a grant from rotary club as well as a literacy coach.

Gilroy High School

- Parent Club did "One Smart Cookie" handout on 1/22 for 603 honor roll students.
- Biomed program held a meeting on 1/24, which had 50 students from Brownell, Solorsano and South Valley.
- Mustang Madness cheer program hosted this event for the younger girls from the community; they all performed with Gilroy High cheer at the boys basketball game 1/31.
- The girls played against Christopher HS, did a tribute to Kobe Bryant, which really united both teams and the community 1/31.
- Choir students are in New York, they performed at Carnegie Hall.
- Mustang Mania for incoming freshman is tonight 2/3; the attendance is higher this year. They are showcasing electives as well, invited current students to attend with their parents to get familiar with the elective programs.
- Week of Feb. 10-14 is spirit week, this year there is different days-having Instagram trend, VSCO, having a meme day, pajama day, and Disney day.
- Winter Dance 2/29.
- GHS is emerging with a program regarding vaping. Mr. Leong, Mr. Corbett along with other staff attended a workshop for tobacco prevention toolkit. GHS is incorporating a 5-session curriculum start in early March in Saturday school. This is a case-by-case basis, want to do intervention with them through Saturday school. Looking to do a ten session curriculum in the fall.
- Anti-bullying rally support 2/4.

Luigi Aprea

- Just finished with the paper drive.
- May BBQ fundraiser in the beginning stages of planning.
- Talent show up and running, will be in March.
- Some special education classes are selling friendship grams.
- Parent Club along with Principal Kelly are focusing on school beautification.

GECA

- General meeting on 1/21, well attended, Mrs. Ratliff gave a presentation on how to obtain AA or AS degree during course study at GECA.
- Regular session with Gavilan classes is now underway, this is the second week.
- Incoming freshman interviews 2/8, they had 186 application, have to get the final number the applicants had until Friday to turn in the PSAT scores.
- General meeting 2/18.
- Going over LCAP info and stakeholder to roll that out at the general meeting.
- Mt. Mike's Pizza fundraiser 1/28.
- Chipotle fundraiser 2/5.
- Started fundraiser, country meats sticks, they are \$1 each.
- Apple fundraiser in March & April.
- Sober grad night in May.
- Chaperoned the 10th graders, who went on a field trip the Hiller Aviation Museum.
- All school field trip is going to Cal Academy of Sciences.

El Roble

- Valentine day grams.
- Did Christmas grams and made \$350.
- Crazy hair day last Thursday 1/30.
- Bingo night scheduled for Friday 1/31, had to cancel it, going to reschedule it.
- Talent show this Friday 1/7, 32 acts, starts at 6:00 p.m. will sell refreshments. \$3 presale and \$5 at the door.
- BBQ 152 fundraiser 2/27.