



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SARATOGA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting
March 25, 2008**

M I N U T E S

Present: Michael Gipe, Pragati Grover, Jack Chang, Cindy Ruby, Shinku Sharma

1. Call to Order/Public Comment

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Board President Michael Gipe. The public was invited to address the board on issues on the Closed Session agenda.

There were no comments from the public.

2. Closed Session

Board members met in Closed Session for:

- 2.1 Approval of recommendations for Teachers' Permanent Status (Probationary II)
- 2.2 Personnel Report
- 2.3 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release (Government Code 54957)
- 2.4 Certificated and Classified Negotiations – Conference with labor negotiator Lane Weiss
- 2.5 Conference with Labor Negotiator (Government Code section 54954.5)
Agency designated representative: Board President Michael Gipe
Unrepresented employee: Superintendent

3. Open Session

Board President Michael Gipe called the meeting into Open Session and reported on action taken in Closed Session and that the board will return to Closed Session at the end of the meeting.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Pragati Grover to approve the Personnel Report and Personnel Report Addendum.

New Hire

Gail Bennett is being recommended for the Literacy Specialist position at Argonaut Elementary School effective March 4, 2008 to June 11, 2008.

Leaves of Absence

James Conn, Core Teacher at Redwood Middle School is requesting a leave of absence for the 2008-2009 school year.

Stephanie Dixon, Kindergarten Teacher at Saratoga Elementary School is requesting a leave of absence for the 2008-2009 school year.

Loy Leveroni, Speech Therapist at Saratoga Elementary School is requesting a 40% leave of absence for the 2008-2009 school year.

Resignations

Jason Engilis, Theatre Arts/Video Production Teacher at Redwood Middle School is resigning effective June 11, 2008.

Cathy Matheson, 80% Occupational Therapist resigned effective March 3, 2008.

Retirement

Rosalie Chako, SVNTP Mentor is retiring effective June 30, 2008. She has been with SUSD for 38 years as an educator at Redwood Middle, Foothill and Argonaut Elementary School.

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma
NOES: 0

4. **Action/Consent Items**

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the Action/ Consent Items including a change in the agenda to move Item 7.2 for discussion after Item 7.4.

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma
NOES: 0

5. **Communications**

5.1 **Community Comments**

- There were no comments from community members.

5.2 **Comments from Employee Groups**

- There were no comments from Employee Groups.

5.3 **Comments from the Superintendent**

- Superintendent Weiss acknowledged former board member John Waite who accompanied a group of Boy Scouts attending the board meeting to earn a merit badge.
- Superintendent Weiss expressed appreciation to the following individuals:
 - Assistant Superintendent Beth Polito for her leadership and thoughtful work in re-energizing the GATE leadership team.
 - STA leadership Mary Thomas and Michele Clement for their positive communication and collaboration
 - Redwood Middle School Principal Kelly Green, Assistant Superintendent Beth Polito, Mardi Kambish and the RMS Math Department for their great work on behalf of our students
 - K-5 parents for their participation in a new conference schedule
 - SEF leadership for their support of our students and the *Last Mile Campaign*
- Superintendent Weiss met with the Solar Panel to discuss feasibility and cost for solar energy use at Redwood Middle School is being studied
- Superintendent Weiss reported Jason Borgen from TICAL, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, spoke at a recent principals' meeting on technology for leaders and shared the top 10 tools for use in education

5.4 **Comments from the Board**

- There were no comments from board members.

6. **Spotlight: Redwood Middle School Students Participated in the 2008 Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championships**

Nineteen students from Gail Inlow's science class at Redwood Middle School participated in the 2008 Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championships held at the San Jose Convention Center. The following students presented their projects:

Christine Tseng	The Green Bathroom
Anoop Galivanche	A Comparison of Different Water Purification Methods
Eren Veziroglu & Michael Chen.	Solar Panel Efficiency

All were impressed by the caliber of the students' work. Special thanks to Gail Inlow for all her work with the students' and their participation in the competition.

7. **Action/ Discussion**

7.1 **Open Public Hearing: Disclosure of District and SCA’s Initial Proposals for the successor contract (2008-2011) contract**

Board President Michael Gipe opened a public hearing at 7:08 p.m. for the Disclosure of District and SCA’s Initial Proposals for the successor contract (2008-2011) contract.

Saratoga Union School District and the Saratoga Classified Association Initial Proposal for Negotiations

The Saratoga Union School District and the Saratoga Classified Association have agreed to open contract negotiations to review and revise a successor contract for the July 2001-June 2004 contract.

The public may send comments or suggestions in writing to the Superintendent or Board of Trustees, at the Saratoga Union School District Office, 20460 Forrest Hills Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070. The Public Hearing will be closed at the board meeting on April 15, 2008. Parents and community members may review a copy of the contract at any school office or the District Office.

Article II	Recognition and Classification
Article III	Classification of Employees, Requirements of Employment and Status and Termination of Employment
Article IV	Rights of Classified Employees
Article VII	Negotiation Procedures
Article VIII	Term of Employment, Work Week and Overtime
Article IX	Evaluation
Article X	Assignment and Transfer
Article XI	Compensation and Benefits (Health and Welfare for the 2008-2009 school year)
Article XVI	Leaves of Absence
Article XVII	Safety

7.2 **Approval of Science Instructional Materials**

Assistant Superintendent Beth Polito reviewed recommendations for the adoption of Science Textbooks and Instructional Materials for grades K-8 and requested the board’s approval.

Board members discussed:

- link between science and math in textbooks and state standards
- science textbooks have math connections linked to grade level standards
- cost for science materials is \$182,565.86
- replenishment of materials is included in the budget
- 24 month requirement for purchasing textbooks/instructional materials
- 7 year cycle for adoption of textbooks

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve the recommendations for the adoption of Science Textbooks and Instructional Materials for grades K-8.

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma

NOES: 0

Board members and Superintendent Weiss expressed their thanks to Assistant Superintendent Beth Polito and the Science Instructional Materials Task Force Committee for all of their work.

7.3 **Budget Update**

Superintendent Lane Weiss updated the board on recent budget information.

- Superintendent Weiss participated in the ACSA Legislative Action Day in Sacramento on March 6th to promote awareness about educational funding. California currently ranks 46th in the country in per pupil spending. There were good discussions with legislators.
- Superintendent Weiss and Assistant Superintendent Polito met with principals to discuss categorical funding for next year.
- It is anticipated there will not be much change in funding for Instructional Materials, Special Education or flexibility in Class Size Reduction.
- The Governor's May Revise is scheduled for May 15, 2008.
- The SUSD Budget Advisory Committee will bring recommendations to the Board in May.
- The SUSD Health and Welfare Task Force will meet this Thursday.

7.4 **Redwood Middle School Math Instruction Discussion**

Superintendent Lane Weiss, Assistant Superintendent Beth Polito, and Redwood Middle School Principal Kelly Green updated the board on parent and staff discussions on the topic of 6th grade mathematics. The board was asked to provide direction on next steps for the 2008-09 school year.

Discussion:

- Math Advisory Committee - 3/20/08 - 20 representatives met for discussion:
 - (1) 6th grade math proposal for instructional grouping
 - (2) Instructional Materials Adoption Process and Timeline
- Redwood Middle School Parent Meeting – 3/24/08 - attended by 115 parents
 - (1) Power point presentation on instructional grouping
 - (2) Good discussion about 6th grade heterogeneous grouping
 - (3) Provided clarity on what “A” and “C” math placement means
 - (4) A few parents were concerned about the timing of the proposal
 - (5) Parents were invited to attend the board meeting and to email the board with comments
- Should staff fine tune the proposal and bring to the board for next year?
 - (1) Communicate with 5th grade teachers
 - (2) Plan professional development and training for teachers
 - (3) RMS math department is enthusiastic and having many rich conversations. Mardi Kambish and Suzanne Ross spoke of their classroom experiences and the benefit of heterogeneous groups
 - (4) Parents have been positive and asked good questions at Visitation Day
 - (5) Approach to providing balance for students – Three Dimensional Success – equally important not to sacrifice balance for students
- RMS Staff Comments provided by Mardi Kambish and Suzanne Ross:
 - (1) One textbook for 6th grade and one for 7th grade.
 - (2) The math department has been discussing creating a benchmark criteria for requests to skip a grade level
 - (3) Heterogeneous grouping in math will also transfer over to science and it is important to have a balanced curriculum opportunity.
 - (4) This will not affect standards or pacing.
- Board Discussion:
 - (1) Positive input from parents who attended the meeting - make sure parents new to RMS have a clear understanding.
 - (2) How will the shadow class work? Where would the shadow class be during the day and how much money is needed to implement it?
 - (3) What is the position of readiness of the math department?

- (4) When is date required to let math department know?
- (5) What is the opinion of the elementary principals? Diane Smalley and Nancy Ondrejka responded that this has been well received by the Math Advisory Committee, that the best learning environment is a diverse group and would like to see that the teachers feel comfortable in differentiating their instruction, and no parent concerns have been heard.
- (6) It is the job of the board to set direction for the district and there seems to be support to pilot 6th grade heterogeneous for next year.
- (7) The board would like to see what resources would be required to support this plan in the areas of professional development and instructional support.
- Parent Questions:
 - (1) If Algebra I is the 8th grade standard – why do so many students take it in 7th grade?
 - (2) Math Olympiad students show a high interest in math – will they be placed according to the criteria?

A recommendation was made by Superintendent Weiss to allow staff to fine tune information regarding fiscal resources, human resources, a communication plan, what metrics will be used to measure and determine if this is a successful pilot, and report back to the board.

Kelly Green thanked the board for the opportunity to do this for our students. She also expressed appreciation to Superintendent Weiss for his guidance and to Assistant Superintendent Polito.

7.5 SUSD 2008-09 School Year Calendar

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented two proposed SUSD 2008-09 school year calendar drafts and requested the board's approval. Draft A follows the traditional start of school on a Thursday and Draft B has the start of school on Monday, the same day as Saratoga High School. The Board's direction has been to align as closely as possible with the Los Gatos-Saratoga High School District.

Superintendent Weiss thanked Saratoga Teachers' Association President Mary Thomas for help in providing input from staff which was evenly split between the two drafts.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Cindy Ruby to approve Draft B as the SUSD school year calendar for 2008-09.

Through the negotiations process conference weeks, professional development and teacher work days will be determined.

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma
NOES: 0

7.6 Approval of Contract for 2007-08 Audit Report

In accordance with Education Code 41020, the governing board of each school district shall provide for an audit of the books and accounts of the school district.

Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton presented the Selection of Auditors for the Annual District Audit for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. We have used Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP for 10 years. The board requested an interview of three auditors in January 2009.

The approval of the contract for the 2007-08 Audit Report will be presented at the next board meeting on April 15, 2008.

7.7 Resolution 329.03/08 – Governor’s Proposed 2008-2009 Budgets

Superintendent Lane Weiss presented Resolution 329.03/08 – Governor’s Proposed 2008-2009 Budget relating to the state education budget. The board was asked to consider approval of the resolution in support of public education.

A motion was made by Cindy Ruby and seconded by Shinku Sharma to approve Resolution 329.03/08 – Governor’s Proposed 2008-2009 Budget.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma

NOES: 0

7.8 Actuarial Study

Chief Business Official Ellen Tipton presented a draft Valuation of Retiree Health and Welfare Benefits Report of Governmental Accountability Standards Board (GASB) 45 Valuation. We are required to have a plan in place for the 2008-09 school year and a study is required every two years. This report estimates the total future liability at \$6,844,000. The report does not take into account \$186,844 the district has set aside in the Post Employment Fund. These are accounting requirements, not funding requirements.

Board members reviewed the report and discussed the following:

- Decide on an accrual method under GASB45
- Determine the best policy regarding funding the liability
- Review different methodologies used by similar districts
- Work with district associations about this

8. Communication

8.1 Community Comments

There were no comments from the community.

9. Future Agenda Items

The Board discussed items for the April 15, 2008 meeting:

- Agenda Online Training - 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Closed Session - 6:00 p.m. / Open Session 6:30 p.m.

10. Return to Closed Session

Board members returned to Closed Session to continue discussion of Item 2.5 - Conference with Labor Negotiator (Government Code section 54954.5)

Agency designated representative: Board President Michael Gipe

Unrepresented employee: Superintendent

11. Open Session – Report Out from Closed Session

Board President Michael Gipe reported on action taken in Closed Session.

A motion was made by Shinku Sharma and seconded by Jack Chang to amend the Superintendent’s contract to add a temporary housing allowance.

AYES: Gipe, Grover, Chang, Ruby, Sharma

NOES: 0

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Clerk of the Board