TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting
11/19/2024 - 06:00 PM
Kreps Conference Room
395 Doherty Drive, Larkspur, California, 94939
Phone (415) 945-1020; www.tamdistrict.org

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order at 4:30 p.m.
Closed Session 4:35 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
Zoom Link: https://tamdistrict-org.zoom.us/j/97890810229?pwd=5xYfbJTLoNcwyCtz7OMYXlGNAi8s09.1
Webinar ID: 978 9081 0229 Passcode: 085283

Board of Trustees
Leslie Harlander, President
Emily Uhlhorn, Clerk
Karen Loebbaka
Cynthia Roenisch
Kevin Saavedra

Tara Taupier, Ed. D, Superintendent

1. Call Meeting to Order

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Tamalpais Union High School District (District) was called to order in the Kreps Conference Room at 4:32 p.m. A quorum was declared present.

2. Approval of Closed Session Agenda

M/S/C (Saavedra/Roenisch), unanimously.

3. Public Comments on Closed Session Agenda

There were no public comments on the closed session agenda.

4. Recess to Closed Session in the Superintendent's Office

A. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)

B. With respect to every item of business to be discussed in closed session pursuant to Gov Code §54956.95: Conference with Legal Counsel

C. With Respect to Every Item of Business to be discussed in Closed Session Pursuant to Gov Code §54957: Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release and/or Reassignment

D. With respect to every item of business to be discussed in closed session pursuant to Gov Code §54957.6: Conference with Labor Negotiator for TFT & CSEA

E. With respect to every item of business to be discussed in closed session pursuant to Ed Code §35146: Confidential Student Matter

1. Request Waiver of Graduation Requirement - Student A

2. Stipulated Expulsion

5. Reconvene Into Open Session

The meeting reconvened into open session at 6:10 p.m.

6. Announcement of Reportable Action Taken in Closed Session

The Board approved the expulsion of Student A for 2024/25 school year.

M/S/C (Saavedra/Roenisch), unanimously 5 ayes 0 noes.

7. Approve Agenda and Review Norms

Item 13E was removed from the agenda.

M/S/C (Uhlhorn/Roenisch), unanimously. Trustee Roenisch read the board norms.

8. Public Comment on the Consent Agenda

There was no public comment on the consent agenda.

9. Approval of Consent Agenda

M/S/C (Saavedra/Uhlhorn), unanimously.

10. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Public comments:

- One public comment expressing frustration regarding student counseling support.
- Four public comments urging the District to consider celebrating an Indigenous People's Day
- Two public comments criticizing the District's health care cap for new teacher hires, which has created a two-tiered, inequitable system
- One public comment criticizing the District and alleging there are racist policies in place
- One public comment criticizing the District's response to the recent racial incident on a sports team; stating it was disappointing to see the entire team on probation.

Superintendent/Board response to public comment:

- The healthcare cap is negotiated with the unions; any changes would also need to be negotiated.

11. Student Trustee Reports

Ruby Ortiz, Tamalpais High School Student Trustee, provided the following updates:

- Racism should not be tolerated anywhere. Students are reporting they feel unsafe, unwelcome and afraid to go to school. We need a zero-tolerance policy.

- Marin Symphony and Youth Education Committee elected Mr. Spiro Tsingaris 24/25 Public School Teacher of the Year
- Girls volleyball finished division 1 title; girls water polo had a huge victory.
- MCAL Championships cross-country
- Spike ball tournament to raise money for ASB
- Canned food drive now; a new club called Nourishing the Neighborhood with connections and volunteers working with various food banks.

Cecilia Ferris, Tamiscal High School Student Trustee, provided the following updates:

- Suicide prevention presentation
- Tamiscal junior night at 5:30pm tomorrow to meet with college and career specialists
- Thanksgiving break and finals coming up

Samantha Winslow, Archie Williams High School Student Trustee, provided the following update:

- Drama put on three plays this month; music is putting on a showcase this week.
- Football ended with a lot of spirit; Waterpolo won MCAL
- Leadership/Peer Resource/ ASB working on events for Native American Heritage month and Persons with Disabilities
- College & Career working hard with juniors and seniors

Emily Hitchcock, Redwood High School Student Trustee, provided the following updates:

- Leadership & Link hosting a pumpkin carving event to build community
- Planning a Friendsgiving event to bring holiday cheer
- Tennis going to NCS championships; cross county NCS on Wednesday; girls golf and field hockey MCAL champions
- Journalism program trip to Philadelphia ranked 10th place
- Just Dinner Event at Redwood High School on 11/13
- Monthly principal chats with Barnaby; great to hear different perspectives

Board/Superintendent Clarity:

- The Board has noted that when racially charged incidents occur in the District, the public often calls for student accountability. However, when students are held accountable, there is often pushback.
- The Board expressed a desire to hear more from students regarding anti-racist education, as current programs do not seem to be effective. Suggestions, feedback, and criticism can be shared through the Youth Advisory Task Force, led by Cathy Flores.

12. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Tara Taupier, Superintendent, began by thanking everyone for attending. She addressed several emails in response to the probation letter for the Tamalpais High School football team regarding incidents of racism. The emails expressed frustration over the decision to place the entire team on probation, calling for the retraction of the decision, a public apology, and allegations that it put athletes in physical danger.

In response, Dr. Taupier emphasized that denying or minimizing these incidents, whether intentional or not, invalidates the experiences of those affected. She urged the community to pause and deeply consider the perspectives of Black athletes and their families while reflecting on the District's

commitment to equity and inclusion. Trustee Roenisch further reinforced that the entire board supports the decision that was made.

Public comment:

- 1 public comment stating collective punishment is not necessarily the right way to go; data shows Black students were suspended and expelled at alarming rates.

13. Trustee Considerations (Please note that times listed for each item are estimated and actual times will vary)

A. Recognition of the Measure B Campaign Chairs (7:00 p.m.)

Corbett Elsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, joined Dr. Taupier, Superintendent, in providing a brief history of Measure B and expressing gratitude to the campaign co-leads, Annie Sherman and Carrie Dauphinais

It was driven by the dedication of volunteers, with no one being paid. While the election has not yet been certified, the measure currently has a 65.4% approval rate.

Both Dr. Taupier and Mr. Elsen extended their thanks to Annie Sherman, Cari Dauphinais, Emily Elder as well as Trustee Uhlhorn, for their support and efforts throughout the campaign.

Public comments:

- 1 public comment hoping some of the Measure B funds would go towards the Bridge Program at Archie Williams High School.

B. Discuss and Take Action on the Adoption of Phone-Free Schools Through the Use of Storage Pouches (7:11 p.m.)

Dr. Tara Taupier, Superintendent, presented on the topic of phone-free schools, addressing the question of how to limit cell phone use during the school day. The proposed phone-free environment would require students to keep their phones off and away all day, including during passing periods and breaks. This approach has already been adopted by schools like Marin Catholic and Marin County Day, and LA Unified plans to implement a phone-free policy across all schools. Additionally, California state legislation is pushing for limitations on cell phone use in schools.

The District conducted a survey among parents, staff, and students, with the results attached. The findings revealed that staff and parents were nearly equally divided, with about 50% supporting a phone-free day. However, that number increased to 60% in favor of a phone-free day if students' phones were accessible during lunch.

Dr. Taupier clarified that if the District decides to adopt this policy, all classrooms would be equipped with unlocking devices. While students often find ways around rules, it is expected that similar challenges will arise in this case as well.

Looking ahead, if the Board chooses to proceed with implementing a phone-free environment using Yondr pouches, it would be implemented in January. If the District decides not to purchase the pouches, the current policy will remain in place, with efforts to address any existing issues.

Dr. Taupier also shared data on student screen time, highlighting the correlation between increased screen use and higher levels of worry, and overall poor mental health.

Board Discussion:

- Many school safety experts discourage students from having phones during an emergency. Each classroom would have an unlocking device.
- As a District, we have to decide what we are willing to go to increase student wellness, interconnectedness, academic focus and sustained focus.
- Look at connecting pouches to CAASPP scores
- The Board is frustrated that teachers are not complying with this directive 10 months in. This affects focus and self-esteem, engagement and connections with one another.
    - In instructional rounds, Principal observations there is high compliance
- Board would like current policy to be re-sent to all staff

Public comments:

- One public comment concerned emergency medical situations and having access to their phone.
    - The Superintendent clarified that there are accommodations for students with medical needs.
- Three public comments in full support of the cell phone restriction policy; no cell phone pouches.
- Two public comments about the placement of caddies not being placed in a restricted area; this step alone, enforcing current rules, is a better solution.
- Twelve public comments spoke against the use of cellphone pouches; students must learn how to self-regulate and money should be better utilized. Tighten up current policy restrictions.
- Three public comments in support of phone-free high school campuses suggested delaying the roll-out of Yondr pouches to ensure a robust awareness campaign or to update and expand the current policy. Additionally, they expressed concern that students would not bring their pouches to school and would create more work for teachers.
- One public comment in support of a phone-free environment whichever way the Board decides. Emergency situations can be made worse when students have access to cellphones.
- One public comment stating the current policy is inline with State Legislation. The caddie system requires less policing than Yondr pouches

The Board took a 5 minute bio break.

C. Discuss 9th grade Ethnic Studies Course, Community and Consciousness Implementation (8:28 p.m.)

Kelly Lara, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services and Paula Berry, Senior Director of Curriculum and Instruction provided an update on the Ethnic Studies Course, Community and Consciousness.

- 3-year design & development process 2021-2024 led by a team of social studies teachers in alignment with the Board-approved course of study
- This is a freshman level course, part of the State mandate.
- The TUHSD curriculum is aligned to the course and CA ethnic studies model curriculum.
- Ms. Berry provided a brief overview of each unit provided and key learning and outcomes.

- Next steps: the community has asked for adjustments to the curriculum to include Jewish American and Arab American experiences.

Board Discussion:

- How many teachers were part of the design team?
    - There were four teachers on the design team; initially there were ten. All teachers are receiving relevant professional development.
- How are the teachers selected to teach this class?
    - All social studies teachers with a social studies credential that have experience teaching freshmen
- The State framework says this course provides: critical thinking and rigorous analysis of historical systems of oppression and the status quo and to imagine new possibilities. Teachers took 3 years to build this course that is balanced, not political and addresses history. Teachers will have classroom norms. Teachers already have difficult conversations with students regarding social issues, drug use, LGBTQIA and sexuality.
- Trigger Warnings
    - High School courses do not typically come with trigger warnings.
    - Warnings were built in for teachers: If you do not manage these conversations well, these spaces can become unsafe spaces.
- The Board would like an overview of the course.

Public Comments:

- One public comment stressed that it's important for white students to learn about systems of oppression to be able to fight against it.
- Three public comments in support ethnic studies that it is taught in a positive light that prioritizes critical thinking; opposed to categorizing students based on their skin color. The lesson plan seems to have veered away from state guidelines.
- Five public comments asked the Board to pause the roll-out of this course for further review. Students need to learn about structural racism. The curriculum feels very divisive and unsafe. The addition of Jewish Americans and Arab American curriculum feels rushed and leaves a lot out such as Black culture in America.
- One public comment urged caution due to the trigger warnings that are part of the course. Hope to redesign the course that does not require warnings.
- One public comment urged the Board to not be swayed by white kids being uncomfortable with these types of conversations.
- One public comment said there is a lot of activity to shut down all ethnic studies.
- One public comment states that white students are put on the spot/asked the Board to revamp the course.

D. Review and Discuss the 2024 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Results (Moved to 12/3/24 Board Meeting)

This agenda item was moved to 12/3/24 Board meeting

E. Discuss Appropriate Terminology to Use When Referencing People Who Identify as Latin American (Removed from Agenda)

This agenda item was removed.

F. Public Hearing on 2023-24 Developer Fee Accounting and Take Action on Resolution No. 24-06 -

ROLL CALL VOTE (9:56 p.m.)

Corbett Elsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations presented:
Public Hearing on Developer Fee accounting declaring developer fee revenues, expenses and carry-over balance for 2023-24.
Revenue: $157,088
Expensed: $71,292 on portable rentals at Redwood and Tamiscal High Schools
Fund balance $783,165 .

Assuming the passage of Measure B this fund balance is expected to be spent on portables during construction.

M/S/C (Uhlhorn/Roenisch)

Roll Call Vote:
Trustee Harlander: Aye
Trustee Roenisch: Aye
Trustee Saavedra: Aye
Trustee Uhlhorn: Aye
Trustee Loebbaka: Aye

There was no public comment.

G. Discuss Next Steps for Measure B (Moved to 12/3/24 Board Meeting)

This agenda item was moved to 12/3/24 Board meeting.

H. Take Action on Board Approval Threshold Levels for Facilities Projects (9:58 p.m.)

Mike Woolard, Senior Director of Facilities Planning, presented a proposal for threshold levels for facilities projects to maximize the Board's exposure and minimize taking up too much Board meeting time. Recommended thresholds are as follows:

Facilities Projects

- Schematic Design (SD) scope, budget, schedule - Take Action
- Changes to SD, scope, budget, schedule-Take Action
- Initial Facilities Prioritized Project List - Take Action
- Change to Facilities Prioritized Project List - Take Action

Contracts

- Over $1 million - Take Action
- Between $220,000 and $1 million - Consent Item
- Between $40,000 and $220,000 - Contract List
- Under $40,000 - Warrant List

Equipment and Material Purchases

- Over $1 million - Take Action
- Between $114,500 and $1 million - Consent Item
- Under $114,500 - Warrant List

Reject all bids - Consent Item

Contract Change orders within Construction contingency- Consent Item
Contract change orders that require additional project funding - Take Action
Project Notice of Completion - Consent Item
Public Hearing - Action Item

M/S/C (Loebbaka/Saavedra), unanimously

There was no public comment.

I. Take Action on Archie Williams HS Tennis Court Maintenance Project Schematic Design (SD) (10:10 p.m.)

Mike Woolard, Senior Director of Facilities Planning, presented the Archie Williams tennis court schematic design. The site asked for four courts to be able to host their own matches. This design would allow for that as well as basketball use. The cost is $400,000 due to the age and cracks currently on the court, which will require coating the entire surface to fill and prevent future cracks. This project is part of a deferred maintenance project (Fund 14). If approved, this project is scheduled for this summer and will take 6 weeks with no impact on any high school sports.

M/S/C (Saavedra/Roenisch), unanimously

There was no public comment.

J. Discuss and Take Action to Change the Date of the Annual Organizational Meeting to Monday, December 16th and Discuss Adding a Regular Board Meeting Before December 13th (10:16 p.m.)

Dr. Tara Taupier discussed changing the date of the Annual Organizational Meeting. This meeting must take place between 12/13/24 and 12/27/24 and first interim approved by 12/16/24.

The Board agreed to:
12/3/24 Special Board meeting
12/16/24 Regular Board meeting

14. Consent Agenda

A. Approve Draft Minutes of the September 10, 2024 BOT Meeting

B. Approve Personnel Summary for November 19, 2024

C. Approve Purchase Orders over $40,000 List No. 08

D. Approve Waiver of Graduation Requirement - Student A

E. Ratify Batch and Warrant Details- October 2024

F. Approve Contracts over $40,000 - November 2024

G. Ratify Contracts Under $40,000 - November 2024

H. Approve High Risk Field Trip - San Quentin State Prison - Tamalpais High School

I. Approve Change Order (CO) #8 to Construction Contract with Engie Services U.S. (Engie) to Construct Solar Canopy Structures at Archie Williams HS, Redwood HS & Tamalpais HS

15. Trustee Reports

There were no trustee reports.

16. Conclusion

Trustee Roenish reflected on the Board norms.

17. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m.