TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special Board Meeting
12/03/2024 - 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 4:55 p.m.
Closed Session 5:00 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
Zoom Link: https://tamdistrict-org.zoom.us/j/99738777736?pwd=vLBD7gb3OPIrLCxVfjgMqDfFSA0w0L.1
Webinar ID: 997 3877 7736 Passcode: 951076

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 was called to order in the Kreps Conference Room at 4:58 p.m. A quorum was declared present.

2. Approval of Closed Session Agenda

M/S/C (Roenisch/Loebbaka), 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

F. Public Employee Evaluation Government Code section 54957: Superintendent

5. Reconvene Into Open Session

6. Announcement of Reportable Action Taken in Closed Session

There was no reportable action taken in Closed Session.

7. Approve Agenda and Review Norms

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

Items pulled for discussion:

- 13B 1
- 13B 2
- 13B 3
- 13C
- 13D
- 13E
- 13F
- 13G

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

10. Student Trustee Reports

Student Trustee Reports:

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

- Finals week is coming up. ASB and peer resource are setting up "the lodge" in the student center as a quiet place to study. There will be peer tutors, snacks and brain break activities.
- College and career opening up, including meetings to assist with college applications

and FAFSA
- Soccer season starting this week
- There is a planned lunch activity with the Bridge program this week for disability awareness.
- Most students are in favor of the ethnic studies course and feel it will be beneficial for all.
- Regarding CAASPP testing, AWHS 11th graders had a difficult time last year which likely impacted test scores.

11. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Tara Taupier, Superintendent, provided the following report:

- Following up on a request for a seal of civic engagement - looking into the process, this would require a committee to decide on five to six criteria, cost, oversight of the program, assessments, and possibly additional classes. It is much more involved than just a resolution from the Board. Dr. Taupier will continue to research and bring updates to the board.
- Next week is a quiet week followed by semester 1 finals beginning 12/16/24. Each site has alternate schedules; please refer to the website for schedules.
- The Coalition for African American Achievement and Belonging is conducting empathy interviews.
- Tamalpais High School Black Student Union held a friends-giving potluck which was a huge success; students reported it was fulfilling to have a lot of participation and making community.
- Congrats to the many TUHSD athletic teams, many who won their league and section titles.
- Congrats to Redwood Bark, which won a prestigious award at the National Journalism Conference in November.

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

A. Discuss 9th grade Ethnic Studies Course, Community and Consciousness Implementation (6:18 p.m.)

This is an update on the 9th grade Ethnic Studies Course, Community and Consciousness, which has already been approved. This will be a required course for incoming freshmen starting in 2025.

Paula Berry, Senior Director of Curriculum and Instruction, reiterated that this course is designed in direct alignment with the California Department of Education model curriculum for ethnic studies. The course design team worked for 3 years, with multiple iterations, and attended 5 series of professional development. They received feedback from staff, students, parents, and community members and implemented that feedback. The core of this course is to create an inclusive curriculum.

At the last meeting, it was announced there would be additional lessons for the Jewish

American and Arab American experience. They would also explore other marginalized groups, such as LGBTQ AI+ and those with intellectual or mobility differences to highlight and elevate their voices.

Timeline: The lessons will be designed in early January with a course roll-out date of January 8, 2025. The first three weeks of the course are grounding, history of ethnic studies and race in the United States as well as setting norms and standards. Ed Services will provide a timeline by the December 16, 2024, Board meeting for the feedback sessions. At the end of each unit and marking period, staff will collect feedback from students, parents and staff which will be used at the end of June for further updates to the course.

Board Discussion:
The Board asked the difference between Ethnic Studies and English Ethnic Studies.

- Kelly Lara explained Ethnic Studies in an introductory course designed for freshmen focused on the concept and principles of ethnic studies. English Ethnic studies is a deeper dive into ethnic studies through literature and the arts.
- This course is preceded by Social Issues first semester, then Ethnic Studies in the Spring semester. Social Issues lays the groundwork for having difficult conversations in the same classroom with the same teacher.
- We want to be collaborative, with full confidence in teachers and educational services, looking to create inclusive classrooms with deep empathy and compassion for each other looking at hard history.

Dr. Taupier thanked the community for their feedback. There is a level of trust as we engage in new curriculum. Teachers are experts in the classroom and in creating inclusive spaces with norms/agreements in place to include every voice.

Public Comments:

- Five public comments criticized the curriculum, stating it does not follow the model curriculum and will divide people asked to restructure the course.
- Two public comments said they are insulted by the curriculum; it is important to teach kids about cultures, helping one another not to divide them.
- Six public comments in favor of this course, stating that 9th graders are being underestimated in what they are capable of handling.
- Four public comments in favor of the course that is fact-based and balanced.
- One public comment urged others to use their privilege to make a difference.
- One public comment thanked the Board for believing and trusting what teachers are doing in their classrooms, especially in real time and in difficult times.
- One public comment asked why did the State of California have to mandate this class? Kids are sharp, please give them the opportunity to learn.
- One public comment expressed concern about Community Consciousness - resistance movements.

The following public comments were submitted to publiccomment@tamdistrict.org

- Five public comments were emailed expressing concern about the curriculum stating it deviates from the model curriculum and is divisive.
- One public comment was emailed asking the District to delay the implementation of this course and expressing concern that the Jewish American and Arab American curriculum has not been developed yet.
- Four public comments were emailed to express support for Ethnic Studies as it stands, further stating it is imperative to address racism given the issues in our District.
- Thirty-two public comments were emailed in support of the ethnic studies course stating that it is long overdue.
- One public comment was emailed to support ethnic studies and requested a focus on Marin City.

B. Review and Discuss the 2024 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Results (7:22 p.m.)

Kelly Lara, Assistant Superintendent Ed Services, and Paula Berry, Senior Director of Curriculum and Instruction, reported 2023-24 CAASPP results.

- All 11th grade students take these assessments each spring, and they include English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.
- Both assessments contribute to the TUHSD Academic Indicator on the California Dashboard (which requires 95% participation/schools with less than 95% participation are penalized).
- 2023-24 90% participation rate (a 20% increase from 2022-23 school year)
    - 71.4% of students met or exceeded the standard 5-year comparison in ELA
    - 53.5% of students met or exceeded the standard 5-year comparison in Math
- Ed Services is reaching out to neighboring districts for advice on how to increase participation rates, outreach to students and parents. Considering ways to reward students that meet or exceed the standard on their transcripts.

Board Discussion:

- CAASPP scores are declining and participation is not meeting expectations, which is very concerning.
- The Board suggested looking at other districts; how they are teaching English, how they are encouraging CAASPP participation.
    - Kelly Lara agrees this data is alarming. They are working closely with teachers to determine a plan.
- Sustained focus is directly connected to cell phone use. Pre-assessments will help, but more importantly, what is TUHSD doing to build focus on reading academic materials, holding students accountable if they have not done the reading without the use of artificial intelligence/shortcuts?

- The Board expressed tremendous concern and requested an update with action items within three months.
- Dr. Taupier reiterated they do not find these scores acceptable either and will bring back an update in March and work closely with teachers.

Public Comments:

- One public comment asked the Board to share with parents what is at stake.
- One public comment said when all classes are graded solely on tests, students are not compelled to do the classwork.
- One public comment stated there is no incentive to take the tests or take them seriously.
- One public comment stated attendance is critical; they cannot teach students who are not in their rooms.
- One public comment criticized reading and math scores; how can the District expect good results with the Ethnic Studies?

C. Discuss Proposal to Amend California Education Code to Include Racist Behavior as a Specific Violation in Statute (8:14 p.m.)

Dr. Tara Taupier, Superintendent presented. The idea to amend Ed Code to include racist behavior as a specific violation came from the Black Student Union at Tamalpais High School, questioning why certain violations in the Education Code are very clear whereas racist acts are not? Through these conversations with the Black Student Union, Administration and Coalition for African American Student Achievement and Belonging (stakeholder group at Tamalpais High School), the idea came forward to approach local Assemblyman, Damon Connollly, to move forward and author a bill to have racist behavior specifically listed as a violation. Students will present to Assemblyman Connolly on December 12 via Zoom so as not to miss school. Dr. Taupier will provide an update.

Board Discussion:

- If Connolly approves, it would go into the legislative process. There would likely be an opportunity for the District to show support.

Public Comments:

- One public comment questioned what is happening at Tamalpais High School and urged the District to do something about the racist issues. Expressed frustration that there were no repercussions for the racist acts.
    - Clarification: there were disciplinary actions taken against the team and individuals, clear directions to all sports teams that this behavior will not be tolerated
- Two public comments urged the Board to focus on building community and stated students need to be connected; they cannot just look at data.
    - Clarification: what reports? Attendance and CAASPP reports

- One public comment stated it was not clear if the Board supports this amendment to Ed Code.
    - Clarification: this is an information item only; the Board fully supports every effort of anti-racism at all levels. The Board will not wait for Ed Code to change to respond to racist incidents.
- One public comment stated there is no deficiency in the current Ed Code; this amendment would invite endless discussions about what constitutes a violation.
- Three public comments commended the Tamalpais High School students for their bravery. Students of color are afraid to report racial incidents as it will not change anything.
- Four public comments urged the Board to explicitly support this Ed Code amendment.

Public Comments submitted to publiccomment@tamdistrict.org

- Twenty-one public comments were emailed in favor of amending Ed Code to include racist behavior as a punishable action.

D. Take Action on Updated Board Policy 3312: Contracts (8:51 p.m.)

Corbett Elsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations presented. Board Policy 3312 was part of the Global Update from Fall. The highlights are essentially best practices for procurement from DWK Legal.

- One main highlight on page 7 states contracts for public works construction and related procurement of goods and non-construction services, including maintenance: The District will follow the Public Contract Code, Ed Code and the California Uniform Public Construction Cost Accounting Act (CUPCCAA).

There was no public comment.

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

E. Update on the Contract Procurement and Approval Process Workshop (8:55 p.m.)

Corbett Elsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, reported on the workshop he and trustee Roenisch attended on November 20, 2024. The workshop included best practices review, reminders, lease, lease-back contracts and where discretion is allowed.

- The root of each contract is to ensure the District is getting quality, that they are doing good work and that the work cannot be done in-house.
- Critical to note that no contract is effective until it is ratified by the Board.
- A change order is a contractual adjustment; the change order approval threshold the Board has approved provides the clarity needed to execute a change order in an efficient manner.

There were no public comments.

F. Discuss Next Steps for Measure B (9:33 p.m.)

Corbett Elsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, reported on the next steps for Measure B Bond.

- Measure B certified as officially passing today
    - 65.76% well beyond the required 55% voter threshold.
    - We are eternally grateful for our continued ongoing support of our community.

- Next steps for current board and new trustees (all vetted with DWK legal counsel)
    - December 16, 2024 Board meeting
        - Board resolution certifying all proceedings from the November 5, 2024, election
        - Board resolution authorizing formation of Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee
    - January 14, 2025 Board meeting
        - Board resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of general obligation bonds
        - Approval of Measure B Bond Facilities Program Prioritized Project List
        - Discussion first reading of AR 7214 general obligation bonds
    - January 28, 2025 Board meeting
        - Adoption of AR 7214
    - February 11, 2025 Board meeting
        - Approval of District Standards for facilities projects
    - March 11, 2025 Board meeting
        - Board resolution establishing an independent citizens oversight committee and appointment of members

- Board Discussion
    - Reminder: new trustees are now subject to the Brown Act
    - What kind of outreach will there be to fill all seats in the Citizens' Oversight Committee?
        - Reach out to community groups, including PTSA, parents, the school community, taxpayer groups, senior citizen groups.

There was no public comment.

13. Consent Agenda

A. Approve Personnel Summary for December 3, 2024

B. Approve Contracts Over $40,000 - December 2024

Items 13B1, 13B2 and 13B3 were pulled from the consent agenda for trustee consideration.

Board Discussion:

- Each contract below is a one-year contract. We will look at consultant contracts annually. The evaluation has nothing to do with the Board's unwavering support of students of color.
- The Board will scrutinize contracts with a lot more lead time moving forward and will move services in-house where they see fit.

13B1: Olas/Lisa Jimenez Contract

- The Board questioned how do we justify $450/hour $80,000/year?
- Have we followed our own protocol to ensure this contract is good value, evaluated if this work can be done in-house, ensure competitive pricing and are there other providers?
- The Racial Justice Task Force events have been great and allowed the community to engage in deep conversations
- M/S/C (Uhlhorn/Roenisch) 2 Ayes; 3 Noes
- OLAS contract is not approved; will need to consult with legal on how to proceed.

13B2: Tenisha Tate/Critical Friends Contract

- The contract was signed in October, but work started in August.
- M/S/C (Uhlhorn/Loebbaka), 4 Ayes; 1 No

13B3: Paul Austin Contract

- The contract was signed in October, but work started in August.
- M/S/C (Uhlhorn/Roenisch), 3 Ayes, 1 Abstain, 1 No

Public Comment:

- One public comment stating they hoped the District does not hire friends/family etc. for District work.

1. Lisa Jimenez/OLAS Contract

Mark Bell emailed stating his disapproval of the District working with Lisa Jimenez. He further criticized her previous work with town of Fairfax.

2. Tenisha Tate/Critical Friends Contract

3. Paul Austin Contract

4. Dynamic Solutions for Youth

C. Approve Overnight/High Risk Field Trips - Redwood High School Mountain Bike Club

Items 14C, 14D, 14E, 14F, 14G were pulled for Board discussion.

Board discussion:

- How do we ensure students follow laws and District rules?
    - Teachers and coaches have direct conversations, reviewing expectations, rules and consequences of violating laws and rules before each field trip.
    - Reminding students and student-athletes that field trips are a privilege.
    - Looking to update forms to include consequences
    - Programs and sports teams are made aware they may lose field trip/tournaments/playoff privileges.

There was no public comment.

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

D. Approve Overnight/Out of State Field Trip Reno, NV - Tamalpais High School Wrestling Team

E. Approve Overnight /High Risk Field Trip -Samuel P. Taylor- Archie Williams High School

F. Approve Overnight/High Risk Field Trip - Point Reyes February 2025- Archie Williams High School

G. Approve Overnight / High Risk Field Trip - Point Reyes January 2025 - Archie Williams High School

14. Trustee Reports

Trustee Reports

- Trustee Roenisch recommended watching 'Social Studies' on Hulu. Docu-series about students in Los Angeles related to social media.
- Trustee Uhlhorn reported:
    - Trustee Uhlhorn attended the MCSBA Executive Committee meeting. Ken Lippi provided an update on keeping undocumented kids safe at school.
        - There will be further information for Admin on what to do if ICE shows up.
        - There will be an event with Jared Huffman for an update on the National level intended for school board members and admin.
        - Finally, there will be an event strictly for parents to communicate with the resources available.
    - Targeted tutoring starting in tutorial classes with Wise Mentoring for 9th and 10th graders on the D/F/I list; Bridge the Gap for older students
    - Trustee Uhlhorn attended a couple of events in Marin City.
        - A BBC documentary from 1970 on Marin City showed a lot of similar issues Marin City faces today.
    - Trustee Uhlhorn attended the Just Dinner Event at Redwood High School;

glad we are rotating where the dinners are hosted

15. Conclusion

Trustee Saavedra reflected on the board norms.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 pm.