

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of the Board of Trustees' Meeting of October 24, 2019

OPEN SESSION

A. CALL TO ORDER – 6:45 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Board Members: Mr. John Baker - Present
 Mr. Eddie Flores - Present
 Ms. Daina Lujan - Present
 Mrs. Patricia Murray - Present
 Mrs. Mina Richardson - Present
 Ms. Kristie Poon, Student Board Member -
 Excused

Cabinet Members: Dr. Shawnterra Moore, Superintendent -
 Present
 Mr. Keith Irish, Assistant Superintendent,
 Educational Services and Categorical
 Programs - Absent
 Mr. Ted O, Assistant Superintendent,
 Business Services - Present
 Dr. Jay Spaulding, Assistant Superintendent,
 Human Resources and Student
 Services - Present

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Trustee Eddie Flores.

D. REPORTING OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION

MOTION #346 (Lujan/Murray) to approve the appointment of Rajpal Bal to the position of Director of Fiscal Services. Motion Carried (Unanimous)

E. CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Mina Richardson asked about change orders. Assistant Superintendent Ted O explained the change order procedure between Consultant Bill Savidge and the construction companies. He said change orders occur when different materials are needed depending on the progress of construction. He estimates the completion date for the Martin ES modernization project will be February 2020.

Trustee Richardson inquired about the cell tower on a SSFHS field pole. President John Baker explained that Verizon rents space from the District for their cell needs

and has done so for approximately the last fifteen years. Mr. O added that recent maintenance work was done on the tower.

MOTION #347 (Lujan/Murray) to approve Item 1a, Change Order #1 to the CWS Construction for the Martin ES modernization project; Item 1b, Ninyo & Moore, Inc. proposals for SSFHS and ECHS fields projects. Motion Carried (Unanimous)

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

F. COMMUNITY FORUM

a. Introduction

President Baker explained the format for a Community Forum. Following a presentation and clarifying questions from the Board, the meeting is opened to the public for comments. Superintendent Shawnterra Moore provided an overview of the presentations being given tonight on school safety and homework practices.

b. School safety: A review of the Big 5 Protocols and site emergency plans

Director Ryan Sebers provided the Board with information on the “Comprehensive Safe School and Emergency Management Plans Update”.

As required, each site has completed their plans for the 2019-20 school year. All site plans comply with the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Plans are submitted to Student Services and reviewed for verification of required components. Suggestions and/or recommendations for improvement are made.

Site Plans to Protect the School Community

- Evacuation and Command Center locations, with alternates
- Site Maps and Plant Schematics (includes Evac Routes and Utilities Locations)
- Utility-Shutoff Procedures
- Safe School Programs and Activities
- Emergency Management Action Plan
- Team Org Chart and Contact Roster
- List of Staff with Emergency Skills Training
- Team Roles and Responsibilities
- First Aid and Emergency Supplies (Inventories)
- Students & Staff with Special Needs
- Child Abuse Reporting Protocol
- Suicide Prevention Protocol
- Master Schedule and Contact Lists
- Emergency Contact Info and Drill Schedule Template

Site Plans and the District's Emergency Management Handbook

- Included within each school site plan.
- Revised Communications section, updates to Alternate Communications Protocol, Sprint ERT Phones
- Refined Parent-Child Reunification Process
- Updated Air Quality Protocol and Procedures

Air Quality

- Is monitored using the Bay Area Air Quality index. Mr. Sebers explained the air quality spectrum and detailed unhealthy levels and corresponding protocols.
- "The **Big 5** states of readiness" - emergency response protocol developed by the San Mateo County Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities. It has been adopted by the San Mateo County Office of Education, as well as police and fire departments within San Mateo County.
 1. Drop, cover and roll (earthquake or explosion)
 2. Evacuation (outside building is safer than inside)
 3. Lockdown/barricade (immediate threat)
 4. Secure campus (potential threat)
 5. Shelter in place

Two levels of security noted were the **Lockdown vs. Secure Campus**. Mr. Sebers said they would occur more frequently on school campuses. Lockdown/barricade is an immediate threat either on campus or about to be on campus. It is a step to protect students and staff and is all about quick action, thinking under stress, and ensuring everyone is behind a locked door in a room and not in an open area. No one can leave a room until an "all clear" is sounded. Typically, a lockdown/barricade is done with police action and they, in partnership with school sites, determine when the campuses are free from danger. Secure Campus is a potential threat when something is occurring in the community, away from a school, but there is a possibility it may make its way to a site. With secure campus, doors are locked and instruction continues.

Mr. Sebers told the community that the school safety drill schedules are submitted to the District Office. He also provided information regarding SSFUSD's collaboration with County agencies to further refine safety protocols and procedures.

G. COMMUNICATIONS

Camellia Nasrah, a SSFHS senior, spoke about surveillance due to the recent vandalization events at that school. She requested increased security to prevent such occurrences in the future. She also commented on the scarcity of restroom facilities throughout her campus.

Vice President Patricia Murray thanked Mr. Sebers for his work.

Trustee Flores asked when it is deemed necessary to barricade a classroom as opposed to the normal lockdown procedure. Director Sebers replied that the situation dictates the need for appropriate safety counter measures. Trustee Flores asked about times when air quality transitions from yellow to red and how it affects students with respiratory conditions. Mr. Sebers stated that the color coding is his measurement and not an official one. He said a flexible standard response is necessary with the limited outdoor activity protocol. Health technicians check on students with health conditions to make sure they are comfortable and if not, the parent/guardian is notified in those situations.

Trustee Richardson asked about ongoing hoax calls which disrupted school operations this semester. Mr. Sebers said the option of inaction is not a possible route. Whenever a hoax call is made, safety protocols need to be enacted.

President Baker inquired about the safety measures regarding phone outages. Director Sebers informed him of the Sprint emergency phones and that fax lines can also double as landlines in case VoIP phones are disabled. President Baker asked about a site's response to a situation, such as a small brushfire nearby resulting in smoke is in their vicinity. Mr. Sebers said it is a flexible model and site administrators have been instructed to not wait for a District announcement to initiate the limited outdoor activity protocol. President Baker suggested creating a policy with examples of circumstances and related protocols.

c. Homework Policy

Educational Services Director Jason Brockmeyer presented information on the District's current **homework policy, BP 6154**. The policy highlights are:

"The Governing Board recognizes that homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline and life-long learning habits, and that time spent on homework directly influences students' ability to meet the district's academic standards.

As needed, teachers may receive training in designing relevant, challenging and meaningful homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives.

Although it is the student's responsibility to do most homework assignments independently, the Board expects teachers at all grade levels to use parents/guardians as a contributing resource.

(Make-up work)

...an excused absence shall be given the opportunity to complete all

assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. (Education Code 48205)

Students who miss school work because of unexcused absences may be given the opportunity to make up missed work for full or reduced credit. Teachers shall assign such makeup work as necessary to ensure academic progress, not as a punitive measure.”

What Research Suggests

Researchers have concluded the following regarding homework being assigned:

- Homework can indeed produce academic benefits, such as increased understanding and retention of the material...
- The quality of homework is more important than the quantity.
- 10-minute rule: homework should be assigned at 10-20 minutes per night in the first grade, and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter.

Positive Effects of Homework

1. Research shows homework can increase in student achievement, especially at the secondary level.
2. Homework can increase student understanding and retention as well as improve critical thinking skills.
3. Homework allows parents the ability to be involved with their child's learning.
4. Homework can help students develop study skills and habits and increase students' willingness to learn independently.
5. Homework can help students develop personal responsibility and time-management skills.
6. Homework assignments that tap into students' interests can be motivating.

Possible Negative Effects of Homework

1. Too much homework can harm students' health and impact quality family time.
2. Too much homework diminishes in its effectiveness and can have a negative effect on student achievement.
3. Homework may disadvantage low-income students and widen the achievement gap
4. Lack of completion of homework can significantly skew grades and result in disciplinary actions.
5. Homework can cause friction within the family and between home and school.
6. Homework can encourage academic dishonesty.

What is a Good Homework Practice

Experts advise schools or districts to include teachers, parents, and students in any effort to set homework policies. Policies should address the purposes of homework; amount and frequency; school and teacher responsibilities; student

responsibilities; and, the role of parents or others who assist students with homework.

Mr. Brockmeyer concluded his presentation by encouraging community members to express their thoughts about homework and its impact on students.

COMMUNICATIONS *(continued)*

Lindsay Bradshaw, a SSFHS teacher, told the Board that homework is important and that it positively reinforces skills. It provides time management skills and pride for high marks. She also suggested that a “no homework” policy not be rushed into, as it will negatively impact student performance.

Deanna Moreno, from Parkway Heights MS staff and a Skyline Middle College parent, suggested that homework be assigned with discretion so that students are not working late into the evening.

Lauren Kitchen, a District parent, said she feels homework is being over-assigned at the elementary levels. She disagrees with the research presented regarding the positive impact of homework.

Hector Camacho, a District parent/teacher, said he does not enjoy the amount of homework being given as it reduces family engagement time. He questioned the effectiveness of homework and if the assignments given are relevant to instruction. He feels the conversation needs to happen and teachers’ voices need to be heard.

Cessia Lim, a high school student, said the amount of homework is too much, but she does understand its importance. She asked that the substance and quality of homework be raised so it is not just busy work.

Vice President Murray asked Mr. Camacho if the County is looking into this issue. Trustee Daina Lujan reported that on March 9, the San Mateo County School Boards Association will be hosting a dinner on the topic of homework.

Trustee Richardson asked at which grade homework on computers is introduced and if the prevalence of computers affects a student’s ability for cursive writing. Mr. Brockmeyer said while computers can help with homework, it is important to understand the purpose of any given assignment and whether it actually furthers learning. Trustee Richardson said she believes the use of computers, by students, leads to better writing skills.

Vice President Murray spoke about a recent Stanford University research paper that says homework disrupts the student/extra-curricular balance. She also noted, in terms of equity, that not all District students have the tools, such as a computer or internet access, at home.

President Baker asked if there has been a more recent study that incorporates the value of extra-curricular activities in Common Core. Director Brockmeyer

replied that he will explore more current research of the correlation.

Trustee Lujan said more data is needed to make a decision regarding homework. The District's homework practices vary greatly from one classroom to another. She asked if the District is aiming for equity and for all students to thrive, if everyone's purpose is not the same and they are not working towards the same goal, how can the same results be expected. She realizes that the stress provided from homework builds character, but asked when it is too much stress and whether students are being taught to develop work/life balance skills.

Trustee Flores stated that he wants students to be successful, but gave the perspective of a student who was on the other end of the equity lens. He asked what should happen at the end of the school day that will help to insure students retain classroom knowledge and prime them to continue learning. He referenced a homework policy model from the Hillsborough City SD which was created by parents and teachers to allow students more unscheduled time to spend with their families or play. Trustee Flores said he would like to hear more comments from parents and students and to update the District's current 2010 homework policy, due to changing times. He suggested the term "homework" be revised to "extended learning".

President Baker asked if there is a minimum amount of homework per teacher. Director Brockmeyer said that it is at the teacher's discretion to assign homework and not turning in homework very much affects a student's grade also. Trustee Lujan asked about consistency in discipline related to homework. Mr. Brockmeyer said this is being looked into and how discipline impacts students. President Baker said he favors a homework model with due dates on assignments so students do not necessarily need to complete the work each night. Mr. Brockmeyer said homework is an assessment tool to provide feedback and be used to adjust instruction for students to reach learning targets.

Trustee Lujan recommended a committee on the various aspects of homework be formulated and that it includes all stakeholders.

For context, Dr. Moore said a first reading of the homework policy went before the Board in February of this year. Based on equity-focused conversations and eliciting staff feedback, she had asked that a second reading be put on hold.

COMMUNICATIONS *(continued)*

Mary Musallam, a Monte Verde teacher, requested an update on the status of the Westborough MS field.

Ms. Moreno reminded the community of the Parkway Heights MS Career Day.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:42 p.m.