

RAVENSWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Board Meeting Room
2120 Euclid Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Board Members:

Ana Maria Pulido, President
Sharifa Wilson, Vice President
Stephanie Fitch, Clerk
Marielena Gaona-Mendoza, Member
Tamara Sobomehin, Member

Draft MINUTES January 9, 2020

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL.**

Vice President Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Trustees Wilson, Fitch, Sobomehin and Gaona Mendoza were present. President Pulido will be attending the meeting via teleconference.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

MSC (/Fitch/Sobomehin) to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Vice President Wilson welcomed everyone to the New Year 2020, and indicated that they were going to wait for President Pulido because there were technical difficulties with the teleconference system.

3. **SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE**

A. School Mergers Proposal: Belle Haven School, Brentwood Academy, Costaño School, Los Robles-Ronald McNair Dual Immersion School, Willow Oaks School.

Interim Superintendent Gina Sudaria indicated that they are revisiting the School Merger Proposals. She presented the original proposal as well as alternative proposals. She shared the following new information for the Board to consider: Impact of the school mergers on the available Bond money, and Board options pertaining to retaining the Brentwood Site. Facts if they do that: (a) Brentwood needs the most renovation. Approximately \$15M. If we keep a district school at the Brentwood site, we will have little or no money to improve other elementary sites, or we would have to eliminate some planned work at the middle school. (b) Leasing options: Private schools interested in leasing are all >600 students - they won't fit at McNair site. KIPP is >500 next year, and also won't fit at McNair site. If we don't have one of our schools at the McNair site next year, we won't be able to lease it in Fall 2020 (no private school will lease it, and any other use requires CEQA and other steps). We need lease revenue and KIPP's pro rata share payments during the 2020-21 school year. (c) Timelines: RTA requires we provide the intent to return forms by January 10, which we will not be able to do if we do not know which schools will be operational. We must notify KIPP of a site by February 1 (Prop 39). Process to declare a site surplus takes 3 to 4 months and delay will result in failure to lease a site in the fall.

Trustee Wilson added the following information: RCSD has \$67M in Bonds in the bank and it has identified in the Master Plan the cost of each site. She does not believe that \$15M would have that much of a negative impact on our availability to renovate the schools. Regarding the intent to return to the District, we do not hire teachers based on a particular site. Ms. Toni Stone shared with the Board the Intent to Return process.

Ms. Sudaria reported that they engaged Ravenswood families, staff and board in November to identify factors to consider when merging schools. In early December, they shared a merger proposal with the Board, families and staff after considering >12 possible scenarios. On December 12, trustees asked for alternative scenarios to consider. In December and early January, staff shared more detail about alternative scenarios. Of the other scenarios, Alternative A is most viable. Ms. Sudaria indicated that if the board recommends something other than the original proposal, they recommend deferring the final vote by one week to allow time to communicate the new proposal to affected families and staff.

Original Proposal: Los Robles-Ronald McNair remains at current site as dual immersion. Brentwood and Costañó Merge and locate at Costañó. Willow Oaks and Belle Haven merge and locate at Belle Haven. No change to the middle school. District explores options to lease out Brentwood and Willow Oaks sites and address Prop 39 Charter Request. She reported the pros and cons of the original proposal. She also presented Alternative "A: including pros and cons for the Board to consider: Los Robles-Ronald McNair remains at current site as dual immersion. Costañó and Brentwood Merge and locate at Brentwood instead of Costañó, Willow Oaks and Belle Haven merge and locate at Belle Haven. No change to the middle school. Available sites: Willow Oaks and Costañó. In terms of facilities, Mr. John Colleton, Director of Performing Arts, reported on what is needed to help support Music and Performing Arts. The presentation also included: Projected Enrollment -Original Proposal and Alternative A; and Scenarios B, C, X, Y and Z.

Trustee Gaona Mendoza did not like the original proposal because it will leave a big area with no neighborhood school. She liked option "B" because it has two neighborhood schools and the dual immersion program in Menlo Park (Belle Haven remains as is, Costañó moves to Brentwood, and Los Robles-Ronald McNair moves to Willow Oaks.) The Board held a discussion on this option and on the one suggested by President Pulido to move Los Robles-Ronald McNair to Costañó and Brentwood to Los Robles-Ronald McNair. Ms. Sudaria reported the pros and cons of these options including how many students ride the bus to school and resources.

Ms. Antonia Macias, Mother of a Student at Los Robles-Ronald McNair, part of the Innovate Schools and DAC/DELAC President, addressed the Board regarding the Dual Immersion Program. She indicated that she agrees with the original proposal submitted by Interim Superintendent Gina Sudaria, who has been working very well with parents. She indicated that if the Board wants to take another decision, they need to talk with parents before they make the final decision.

Mr. Ruben Abrica, Community Member, addressed the Board regarding the Willow Oaks community. He pointed out that several years ago, the west side lost a school right behind O'Connor and Euclid. He noted that the Willow School Community is really East Palo Alto Community. He believes that putting its students in Belle Haven is going to create major problems to that community. He also suggested the possibility of moving the Dual Immersion Program to Willow Oaks.

Ms. Michele Sharkey, 4ers Organization Director, indicated that they would be really disappointed if the Costañó's campus leave the Ravenswood Family. They have invested a lot of money there. She hopes that Costañó campus stays at Ravenswood. Trustee Pulido asked Ms. Sharkey to make a presentation to the Board about the improvements the 4ers Academy has made at Costañó.

MSC (Fitch/Wilson) to merge Brentwood and Costañó schools. Roll Call Vote: President Pulido, No. Vice President Wilson, Yes. Trustee Fitch, Yes. Trustee Gaona Mendoza, Yes. Trustee Sobomehin, Yes. Motion carried 4-1.

Mr. Abrica addressed the Board regarding bussing. He indicated that there is a difference between bussing kids on the same side of the freeway and to Belle Haven. It will also be a very sad displacement of the student population on the west side.

MSC (Fitch/Wilson) to merge Willow Oaks and Belle Haven schools. Roll Call Vote: President Pulido, Yes. Vice President Wilson, Yes. Trustee Fitch, Yes. Trustee Gaona Mendoza, No. Trustee Sobomehin, Yes. Motion carried 4-1.

MSC (Fitch/Sobomehin) to keep Los Robles at the McNair site. Roll Call Vote: President Pulido, Yes. Vice President Wilson, Yes. Trustee Fitch, Yes. Trustee Gaona Mendoza, No. Trustee Sobomehin, Yes. Motion carried 4-1.

MSC (Pulido//Sobomehin) to locate Willow Oaks and Belle Haven schools at Belle Haven. Roll Call Vote: President Pulido, Yes. Vice President Wilson, Yes. Trustee Fitch, Yes. Trustee Gaona Mendoza, Yes. Trustee Sobomehin, Yes. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

MSC (Pulido//Sobomehin) to locate Brentwood and Costaño schools at Costaño. Roll Call Vote: President Pulido, Yes. Vice President Wilson, No. Trustee Fitch, Yes. Trustee Gaona Mendoza, No. Trustee Sobomehin, Yes. Motion carried 3-2.

Interim Superintendent Sudaria noted that the original proposal passed.

Vice President Pulido reported that the Regular Board Meeting will be held on January 16, 2020.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice President Wilson adjourned the Meeting at 8:19 p.m.

February 13, 2020

Date of Approval

Clerk's Signature

/nm