

BERKELEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
1231 Addison St., Berkeley, CA 94702
510-644-6206
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Official Minutes
June 17, 2020

President Judy Appel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. She reported that the Board convened to Closed Session at 5:30pm.

Roll Call

Board of Education:

Judy Appel, President – Present
Ty Alper, Vice President – Present
Ka’Dijah Brown, Director/Clerk – Present
Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Director – Present
Julie Siniai, Director -- Present
Estella Hemp, Student Director, BHS – Present
Edwin Castro-Romero, Student Director, BTA

Administration:

Brent Stephens, Ed., D, Superintendent
Baje Thiara, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services
Pauline Follansbee, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Lyz Chairez, Recorder

OPEN SESSION

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda:
Alper/Brown and approved 6-0.

REPORT CLOSED SESSION

Vice President Alper reported out on closed session:

Collective Bargaining - Government Code Section 54957.6(a) (District Negotiator:
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa

Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT)

The Board heard an update and gave direction; no action taken

Berkeley Council of Classified Employees (BCCE)

The Board heard an update and gave direction; no action taken

Public Employment (Government Code Section 54957)

Professional Development, Coordinator

Motion by VP Alper, second by President Appel to approve staff recommendation to appoint Adelita Martinez as coordinator of professional development. Vote was 4-0 in favor with Director Brown absent.

Principal

Motion by Director Sinai, second VP Alper by to approve staff recommendation to appoint Candyce Cannon as the principal of Cragmont School. Vote was 4-0 in favor with Director Brown absent.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

A total of 6 people addressed the Board:

One comment advocating for equity at Longfellow

Three comments in support of school renaming

One comment in opposition to resolution proposing eliminating the RSO position.

One comment in favor of reopening schools.

UNION COMMENTS

Matt Meyer, BFT President commented on the need to support teachers to adjust to the new educational experience. He shared that teachers gathered visually during the last week of school to begin planning for next year. It will be challenging to create productive learning environment with all of the restrictions in place. He emphasized the importance of making decisions on school reopenings based on science and not from our desire to return to in person instruction or as a cost saving measure.

BCCE PResident Linette Robinson commented on the importance of being thoughtful as budget cuts and commented in support of preserving the SRO position.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

PCAD member Laura Babbitt thanked the Board and administration for an engaging town hall last night. She announced that a BLM caravan rally will be held on June 27.

BOARD MEMBER AND SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Director Leyva-Cutler thanked all who participated in the Town Hall last night and said that she appreciated the opportunity to listen to the experience and concerns shared by staff, students, families and community members. With respect to the proposed

reduction of the RSO positions, she said that no final decision has been made. There is still much conversation taking place around this matter.

Director Sinai congratulated all BUSD graduates. She recognized the BHS team for putting together such an inspiring virtual graduation. She thanked the members of the Jefferson community who spoke earlier and who have been advocating for a name change for years even after the then Board did not approve the name change. She expressed feeling proud to sit on a board that agrees on the importance of renaming Jefferson. With respect to the SRO position in question, she recalled that she and Director Leyva-Cutler both expressed interest in revisiting this proposal during the BLM resolution discussion last week. She clarified that the SRO is an armed police officer whose position is funded by the city, and is not the same as a school safety officer. She and Director Leyva-Cutler are working on a resolution aimed at rethinking the purpose of the position and the role of police in our schools. President Appel congratulated.

President Appel congratulated the graduating class of BHS. She thanked the PCAD members and the African American community members who participated in the town hall and appreciated listening to all of the experiences shared.

Director Brown thanked all who spoke on Longfellow during public comment and their need for additional support. She shared that she will visit a classroom to watch the 2005 board meeting where the Board voted to not approve the recommendation for name change of Jefferson. She added that the conversation about racism that took place at the African American affinity town hall was rich and thought provoking and it must continue.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar:
Brown/Leyva-Cutler and approved 6-0.

ACTION ITEMS

Public Hearing for and Approval of Tier 1 Reductions for 2020-21

Dr. Stephnes introduced this item. He noted that the district is in its four week of budget development since the May revise.

Assistant Superintendent Follansbee presented the preliminary budget highlighting a negative COLA for LFF.

She walked the viewing audience through the implication of this loss in funding on the various budgets.

In terms of anticipated expenses, Dr. Stephens presented expenses that will be necessary as we adjust to restrictions. He noted that expenses associated with reopening schools are still being tallied and so far \$1.4 million has been tallied. Tier one includes selective hiring freeze, reduction of staff overtime, DO admin furloughs, nutrition services, contracts, subs, cooking and gardening, one time funds and a reduction of other positions for a total of \$5 million in solutions.

Tier two reductions would be implemented only if necessary and include additional staff reductions, staff furloughs, and cooking and gardening totaling \$3.4 million in solutions and a combined \$8.5 million. The third tier includes transportation, layoffs, additional furloughs, and early retirement incentive.

Tiers 1 and 2 represent reduction in expenditures and increased contributions are included in the preliminary budget. He noted that as revenue is restored, tier 2 reductions will be eliminated.

Questions and discussion on the proposed cuts to general fund followed.

President Appel went down the line to gauge the support of each board member for each proposed reduction.

Director Snain requested pulling the math coordinator and holding off until tier 2 before we make any decision impacting math.

Superintendent Stephens clarified that while the Board is being requested to approve proposed reductions in tier 2, tier 2 cuts will not be implemented until after we know what kind of federal assistance BUSD is getting.

With respect to the LCAP, Superintendent Stephens said that there is currently a \$500k budget deficit in LCAP. Staff is proposing cutting super science Saturday and tutoring stipends for a savings of \$133,000

Director Sinai moved to approve proposed reduction with the exception of the math coordinator position. Motion was seconded by Director Brown and approved 6-0.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT

One comment on prioritizing Longfellow.

One comment on the LCAP budget

ADJOURNMENT

10:07pm