

SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS AGENDA ONLINE MINUTES

Special Meeting - SRCS Board of Education

April 01, 2015 3:30 PM

District Office - Boardroom

310 Nova Albion Way

San Rafael, CA 94903

I. OPEN SESSION/ ROLL CALL

Minutes:

President Tuatagaloa convened the meeting to Open Session at 3:35 PM.

Trustees present were:

Natu Tuatagaloa

Rachel Kertz

Linda M. Jackson

Maika Llorens Gulati

Greg Knell arrived at 3:45 PM.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Minutes:

Sean Rozell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS on Agendized Item(s)

Minutes:

Carmen Puga, CSEA President: spoke on behalf of IT department; strongly objected to the contracting out of IT work. She asked that the email she sent to the superintendent and board president be forwarded to other trustees.

Ms. Puga read a message on behalf of SRFT President Chris Simenstad stating that SRFT agrees that the district cannot continue to hire consultants to deal with Infinite Campus issues. A new consultant is a stop gap; need to hire long term.

Ms. Puga continued that CSEA will not tolerate having an outside organization supervise and evaluate members.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

V. BOARD BUSINESS: (ESD/HSD) Approval of Agreement Between San Rafael City Schools and Think Connected, LLC

Motion Passed: Approval of the Agreement between San Rafael City Schools and Think Connected, LLC with the amendments to rewrite the Scope of Work, add a respect clause, and remove references to evaluation and/or management. Passed with a motion by Rachel Kertz and a second by Greg Knell.

Yes Linda Jackson

Yes Rachel Kertz

Yes Greg Knell

Yes Ms. Maika Llorens Gulati

Yes Natu Tuatagaloa

Minutes:

Superintendent Watenpaugh provided clarifying information. With the loss of key positions, the Think Connected contract will provide oversight to the Information Technology Dept. The contract term is for up to 6 months with a dollar amount not to exceed. Think Connected will assist department staff and keep the momentum moving forward with priorities such as master schedule development, SBAC, SIS, attendance reconciliation and operations.

Dr. Zaich noted Think Connected was recommended by the MCOE Technology Department. They have provided CTO like services for Ross, Reed and Ross Valley districts in the county. They will work with IT staff on high priority issues such as SBAC and SIS until a new chief technology officer can be identified.

In response to questions from Trustee Llorens Gulati, Dr. Zaich reported: the key positions that had recent resignations are the CTO, Database Administrator and an IT Support staff member; upon seeking recommendation for interim support Think Connected was the first recommendation, the second recommendation was for a firm out of Novato that was determined not to be a match for the district, and the 3rd recommendation was for MCOE specialized support services. Superintendent Watenpaugh added he has spoken with other county superintendents who have used Think Connected and it is reported that their knowledge base is high and can provide the support that is needed immediately. Josh Demetri, Think Connected IT Services manager is a former SRCS IT employee, familiar with the district.

Staff responded to trustee questions and discussion regarding: the process used to identify this consultant, the plan to use an independent assessment done by Dr. Barbara Vrankovich in the hiring process for a new CTO; clarification that Think Connected will not be writing evaluations for district IT staff; the financial costs and the urgency of bringing in this outside group versus a longer term process of hiring staff; CTO Rozell's estimate that currently 7 additional staff members are needed in the department, with CBO Thomas providing approximate costs and limitations with the HSD budget in deficit spending; and the contract can be terminated by either party at any time with no cause.

The following individuals addressed the Board:

Noel Mathias, IT Support: in response to questions from President Tuatagaloa, provided clarification

that CALPADS has been taken care of, and clarification that the IT support person who resigned provided desktop support.

Alex Perez, Database Administrator: regarding 2 tech support handling SBAC for 9 schools; database infrastructure has been done for the CALPADS deadline tomorrow; Infinite Campus was handled by the database administrator who recently resigned. He noted his preference to have new staff join the department. He requested that the Think Connected Scope of Work be rewritten to reflect support to the department rather than project management.

- Ren Yildiz, IT Support: regarding lack of IT personnel results in frequent crisis reaction.

- Drew Hanson: regarding the impact on current IT staff's day to day activities to onboard the consultants and bring them up to speed.

CTO Rozell noted that interviews were held last week for IT techs, with 2 strong candidates who have potential to be hired in the next couple of weeks.

President Tuatagaloa noted that the IT department needs help as soon as possible. The consultant can provide this assistance to the department. He added that the potential candidates identified in recent IT interviews is a good sign.

Trustee Kertz and Dr. Zaich will work with the consultant for clear roles and responsibilities and rewriting of the Scope of Work. Ms. Kertz recognized the time IT staff will be giving and the importance of their assistance to have the consultant be successful. She added that Think Connected's experience working with other districts may provide a new opportunity to bring a fresh set of eyes.

Trustee Llorens Gulati suggested that department and consultant's work be reviewed at the end of each month to see how things are going.

Ms. Puga reiterated that the board should read the email she sent. She suggested a respect clause be added to agreement, for the work of what employees are currently doing.

President Tuatagaloa asked those present if there were other recommendations to immediately address the district's IT needs. No comment and no other alternative were suggested. Mr. Tuatagaloa indicated he believe staff's recommendation was the best course of action at this time.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: 3:59 PM

Minutes:

There being no further business, President Tuatagaloa adjourned the meeting at 4:25 PM.

President

Superintendent