

PARADISE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 3, 2009

1. OPEN SESSION

The Special Board meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:01 p.m. at the Assembly of God Church in Stirling City, CA.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present were: Mike Greer, Tom Conry and Lisa Nelson. Tim Titus and Donna Nichols were absent.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

5. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Conference with labor negotiator (Government Code §54957.6):
 - 1. Certificated negotiations regarding Teachers Association of Paradise/CTA/NEA
 - 2. Classified negotiations regarding Paradise Classified Employees Association
- B. Personnel Issues (Government Code §54957):
 - 1. Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release
- C. Conference with real property negotiator (Government Code §54956.8)
- D. Conference with legal counsel regarding existing/anticipated litigation (Government Code §54956.9)

6. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION

Open session was reconvened at 6:41 p.m. Mr. Greer thanked the residents for the opportunity to meet in Stirling City. He commented that he would like to make it a regular occurrence.

7. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee, Lisa Nelson.

8. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION

No action was taken during closed session.

9. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Budget Presentation

Mrs. Stutznegger handed out information regarding the state budget and the Paradise Unified School District Budget.

Superintendent Bylund explained that if anyone would like to express their opinion or comments, they can go to the PUSD website, where an area has been set up for community input regarding the budget.

Mrs. Stutznegger added that this is a difficult time for all. She stated that the business of PUSD is to teach school and that the District will do what has to be done to make sure that it can continue to do that. She also presented ideas to save money for the District, such as working on better attendance. She suggested that parents can help by keeping students in school as much as possible. The current attendance rate for PUSD is 94.85%, and a 1% change could make a big difference. She encouraged parents to write to government officials. She then handed out a list of 95 suggestions from personnel as well as the public, indicating ways in which the District could save money.

Tracy Kirtson asked if administration has taken any cuts. Mr. Bylund stated that the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel will not be replaced, as well as the Director of Transportation, who is retiring. Tracy then asked if the Board gets a stipend. Mr. Greer explained that a stipend of \$240 per month, or health benefits are offered to board members. Ms. Kirtson stated that the Board shouldn't receive any benefits. Mr. Conry asked her to go to the website and type her comments in. He also commented that no one specific group will carry the burden.

Sue Boone asked if landscaping and maintenance is included in this budget. She suggested that the District consider working with vocational rehab and other government benefit programs. Mr. Bylund stated that a meeting will take place tomorrow regarding ROP funding to provide career classes at Paradise High School. Ms. Boone suggested partnering with the Work Training Center. Mr. Greer stated that many people don't realize that the District is bound in many ways as to what can and cannot be done, that the district is bound by contractual obligations.

Patti Mix stated, "You cannot sell Brakebill school. We want the school to be opened."

Mr. Bylund indicated to Ms. Mix that the particular item she suggests is from the list she was handed, and was simply someone's comment, not a proposal.

Marilyn Connor asked about the suggestion of closing Cedarwood Elementary.

Melissa Crick suggested that Brakebill could be used as a preschool.

Mr. Bylund stated that with a recent study, it was concluded that there are not enough students residing in Stirling City to open up the school again. Between 90 and 100 students would be needed, and at present time, there are only 26 students who would attend.

Rona O'Neill stated that her daughter went through Brakebill school with only 24 students. There were three classes, and some students were bussed. She indicated that with no school, it is breaking the bond with the community. She said, "We want our school back".

It was suggested to take down the fence by Brakebill.

Charlotte stated that she understood that some fifty years ago PUSD promised in an agreement that they would never close Brakebill school. She said it should be on record. Stirling City generated money. She suggested that someone find the agreement that stated the school would never be closed.

Rona O'Neil added that Stirling City residents were promised that they would have a Board member on the School Board forever.

Suggestions by the public were:

- looking at ways to save water, i.e. inexpensive filtration system to reuse water for watering lawns.
- Opening up Brakebill would be one of the best assets to financial problems because many people would volunteer.
- Cal Works could be a resource
- Changing the lighting
- Converting to solar energy

A parent expressed concerns about lunches and bussing. She said the vending machines are costing her \$20 per day. She said costs are huge. Mrs. Stutznegger asked her if bus passes keep her child from coming to school. The parent indicated that yes, sometimes because students steal each others' bus passes.

Another parent complained about the food being too high in calories, and having no nutritional value. She said it would be cheaper to serve whole foods rather than processed foods.

When a parent asked what would be done about the shortfall, Mr. Bylund stated that the District is waiting for the government to make a decision regarding the budget. In the meantime, District administrators are going to school sites and holding community meetings, and hoping to hear soon what the state budget will be.

Lauri Batz commented that she has a tenth grader riding the bus, and that it's more economical to pay for a bus pass than to drive her student to school. She stated that she is thankful for the bus transportation.

A parent commented on an item on the Suggestions List regarding cutting library specialists. She stated that senior citizens groups are an overlooked resource and could volunteer that type of service. She asked if it would be possible to fill some positions with volunteers.

Another parent said that she tried to get a tutor, and the District does not have a list of tutors.

Mr. Bylund stated that the District does not endorse tutors, but could get a list for her to make a choice from.

A parent stated that while living in Georgia, the teachers there were on call, which made children more enthusiastic because they knew if they needed help they could get answers over the phone.

A parent asked what classified salaries and benefits are. Mr. Bylund explained that classified employees are secretaries, custodians, instructional aides, etc. She asked why their benefits cost so much and why they can't get other benefits, such as Medi Cal. Mr. Bylund explained that through collective bargaining, there are agreements to pay employees benefits as well as Workers Comp, Social Security and Medicare.

A parent stated that in Georgia they had standards and the school system was excellent. They did fundraising for advanced reading programs. If teachers fell below standards they were immediately reviewed.

Mr. Bylund suggested that if there are other questions, please call the office or email the website. He also mentioned that there will be parent meetings and staff meetings in order for parents and staff to share ideas and concerns.

Rona O'Neill asked the Board when they will come up to Stirling City again. Mr. Greer indicated that a meeting will be held in Stirling City again by the end of May. He explained that as PUSD goes through the process community members will see many events going on that they can take part in. At this point we don't know what the state is doing. All we can do is prepare for the worst it can be.

Mr. Greer stated that his understanding of what took place fifty or so years ago, was that Brakebill School was closed because the number of students was so low. He indicated that accurate information needs to be gathered.

A parent stated that nine other kids in the area are being home schooled, and that when she moved to the area she was told it would take 50 students, then 60 students to open the school. Mr. Greer stated that since that time, state laws have changed and the cost per student has gone up. It would cost an estimated \$120,000 per year to run the school. The parent then stated that students from Toad Town, DeSabra and Lovelock could be transported to the Stirling City school. She asked if it is safe to say that the Board will have figures of transportation costs as well as annual costs when the Board returns in May. Mr. Bylund stated that if she could provide him with names of students, grades, addresses and phone numbers, he would be happy to call homes and see if there are enough students in the area to make the opening of Brakebill feasible.

A parent asked if the Superintendent could find out how many students were enrolled at the school when it closed.

A parent suggested that Brakebill students could ride public transportation, i.e., B-Line.

Mrs. Nelson encouraged anyone who does not have access to a computer to write suggestions down and give to the Board members before the end of the evening.

Marilyn Connor stated that she will bring suggestions to the Board.

B. Report from Community and School Site Meetings

Mr. Bylund stated that this subject was covered in item A.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Glenn Stankis handed a memo to the Board titled, "Time has arrived for the Board to include the PHS elective, the widely used course, The Bible in History and Literature", and read it in its entirety.

11. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Bylund stated that as directed by the Board, PUSD has been holding meetings at every school site, has doubled the number of board meetings, and held a community meeting last night at PHS. The Board has also provided an email address to send suggestions, and placed an address on the front of the website for community and parents to include suggestions. The Board is looking at maximizing the opportunity for all parents, community members and employees to have a voice and express concerns throughout the budget process. The administration is collecting suggestions from employees, parents and community as to what the core needs for the educational system are. After defining the core needs, we have asked them to list things that enhance that, and make it the best education we can, given the funding that we have. Thirdly, they were asked to suggest things that they think are good, but are not essential to run our schools. The information will be gathered and put together for the Board and presented at the study session on February 10th. Hopefully, by that time we will have more dollars and cents information from the state and a sense of priorities from staff, parents and community. Then we will start to fashion the budget that will need to be balanced. If we do not balance the budget, the county and state will step in to balance it, and we want to do it with local input and local control.

12. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Approval of Resolution 08/09-18 regarding energy conservation guidelines

Mr. Conry moved, Mrs. Nelson seconded, to approve resolution #08/09-18 regarding energy conversation guidelines. Motion carried.

Mr. Conry asked if the District office could set their thermostat a little lower than 68 degrees. Mr. Bylund stated that the District Office is set at 67 degrees.

B. Approval of Resolution 08/09-19 regarding solving the budget crisis

Mr. Conry moved, Mrs. Nelson seconded, to approve resolution #08/09-19 regarding solving the budget crisis.

Motion carried.

Mr. Greer asked the public to contact legislators. The Board members have all contacted legislators. He urged parents and grandparents to write to them, as those are the people the legislators are interested in hearing from.

Mr. Conry thanked everyone who helped to move this resolution forward. It's something the District can be very proud of. He stated that as a community, we need to let the state know that we are not going to sit by and let Sacramento do this to our school district. We need to tell Sacramento that we are not going to let them do that to our children.

13. BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS
None

14. FUTURE BOARD ITEMS
None

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

President, Board of Trustees

Clerk, Board of Trustees