

SCHOOL/CITY LIAISON COMMITTEE
PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CITY OF PALO ALTO

DATE: October 17, 2013

MINUTES FOR MEETING OF October 17, 2013

<u>Opening</u>	<p>The School/City Committee held a special meeting in the District Conference Room A at 25 Churchill Ave, Palo Alto. The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.</p> <p>* All handouts can be viewed in the Business Services Office 25 Churchill Ave.</p> <p><u>Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives:</u> Melissa Baten Caswell, Board Member, Committee Chair Heidi Emberling, Board Member Cathy Mak, Chief Business Officer</p> <p><u>City of Palo Alto Representatives:</u> Gail Price, Council Member Liz Kniss, Council Member Pamela Antil, Assistant City Manager</p>
<u>Approval of Minutes – September 16, 2013</u>	<p>MOTION: Caswell moved to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2013, meeting. Seconded. Minutes were approved 3-0. Council member Liz Kiss joined the meeting after the minutes were approved.</p>
<u>Oral Communications</u>	<p>Stephanie Munos said she is a health reform advocate. The medical profession has come to admit that health is not about doctors. Health is about a healthy diet and exercise. Health insurance is not about health, it's about paying for remediation. The problem at the core is taxpayers have been dragooned into supporting a health system that is given to private insurance companies to make money off of. They should follow Europe's model of placing all the money into a pool and use that to pay the medical system and worked well. There is no other way.</p> <p>Stephanie Munos said there is an enormous debate about space for senior housing. They have run out of space and it is costing \$16 million for two acres. On the other hand, the PAUSD teachers are also not being well housed in Fairfield and Petaluma. The cost of living in other communities has gone up just as in Palo Alto. Teacher salary has had to go up so that they can live.</p>
<u>Review of Recent City Council/PAUSD Board Meetings</u>	<p><u>City Update:</u> Price said there is continued effort at Cubberley to monitor things since the showers were closed; the situation has improved. They had a more detailed discussion about the \$250,000 allocation over a two year period. It will be primarily working with the County addressing issues and supporting programs for homelessness issues. These are specific programs related to seeking housing options, more focus on intensive case management, and coordination among the various service providers of homelessness services. The County of Santa Clara and the City of San Jose will have a meeting on Friday to address homelessness issues, affordable housing, and the Affordable Care Act.</p> <p>Caswell asked if there are any families involved and how is the information shared? Price said that is a question that has been asked in the past. They heard there is a family, a single mom with two kids. The Homelessness Services Task Force and the City of Palo Alto are involved. Price asked who at the District should be notified? Emberling said Brenda Carillo, Student Services Director is the contact person. Price will send an email to community services and ensure Dennis Burns is aware. Kniss asked how many numbers of families are in the McKinney program? Carillo would have that information. Price will request the data from Carillo through email.</p> <p>Price said they continue to discuss transportation demand management with trip reduction as the focus. There are many alternative programs available. The primary focus area is downtown at California Avenue and University Avenue. The overall concept of trip reduction has been something</p>

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the District has been involved in working with the PTAs on carpooling. The City of Palo Alto is moving forward by detailing how this will be addressed and will examine various models of transit demand management and alternative programs.

Kniss asked how did the District's Walk and Roll event do? Caswell said it went very well; they will have the numbers at the next meeting.

Price asked if the walk and roll maps are on the sites? Caswell said they are on the school websites. Three schools are still working on their maps but once they are finished, they will post them.

District Update: Emberling said they held Unity Day at Duveneck. They had representatives from the fire department, police department, and school board, district office, and their community advisory committee for special education. Every high school, middle school, and about half of the elementary schools participated for Unity Day. Some elementary schools held their Unity Day on other days.

The Board received an update on the District's special education efforts. They talked a lot about the inclusion classrooms particularly at the Pre-K and Young Fives levels. The inclusion classrooms Sharon Keplinger, Principal at Greendell has are amazing. Some of these students are able to leave the special education designation because they have developed so many tools in terms of coping with the classroom setting and accessing their education. They are also working on a co-teaching model, where there is a special education professional that comes to the classroom and partners with the teacher. This is happening more at the high school level. Principal at Paly Kim Diorio spoke about how that is working.

Kelly Pickle presented at the Board meeting on how they can bring in the most effective professional learning opportunities that will have continuity throughout the year. Caswell said they have allocated \$5 million over a three year period for professional development. Part of Dr. Pickle's challenge is to create a comprehensive program and evaluate the things that are done. They will see a lot more data on this.

Emberling said on Sunday, Fairmeadow had a grand opening for the new two-story building and new playground area. They also added more bike racks at Fairmeadow.

Emberling said there will be two community events for Common Core orientation for parents at the Boys and Girls Club on October 28 that Dr. Skelly will speak at and at the District office on October 30 in the evening. There is more information on the District website. Caswell suggested placing this on a future agenda.

Common Challenges with Medical Benefits

Price said they recognized that the City and the District are not on the same system but wanted to explore if there are common areas that they can share research on and consultant support regarding benefits.

Chief People Officer Kathy Shen explained that the City gets their health insurance through Calpers and they are limited to the plans offered by Calpers.

Associate Superintendent Scott Bowers said the District does not get into the details of pricing of the plans or modifications. The District's broker Keenan & Associates works directly with the providers and insurance companies to get the renewal numbers of what the costs for the plans will be. The District can choose from any plan that an insurance company has filed with the State of California. The District currently uses Blue Cross and Kaiser as their medical benefits providers.

Shen said the City is at 90/10 this year with employees paying 10% for benefits. Bowers said this year they have agreed to a 90/10 so employees will pay 10% of the monthly premiums or medical insurance. The District pays 100 percent of dental, vision, and life insurance.

Kniss asked if they anticipate there are ways to save money on this, can somebody opt into an

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exchange or is this something they have already looked at?

Bowers said their benefits are available to employees working 50% or more regardless of their salary. They could go to the exchange but it would not be as good coverage but it might be less expensive. Anybody working less than 50% is not eligible for District benefits.

Shen said there are private insurance company groups such as Wells Fargo and Keenan that are developing their own private exchanges that are turning out to be less expensive than Covered California. The City covers more than 90% of their employees. They have not really seen an impact from the Affordable Care Act. The hourly employees that do not have health benefits can use the exchange.

Price said historically the District has covered families in terms of these options, are you maintaining that position or are they examining family coverage versus individual coverage and anticipating any modifications in those packages. Bowers said both classified and certificated employee groups have a figure that is in the contract. Right now it is \$12,865 per eligible employee. This figure is multiplied by the total eligible FTEs they have to determine the District's obligation for health, dental, and life insurance. It sets the amount of money that will go into the cost of benefits pool and with that figure they will look at what they can purchase in terms of benefits. In order to keep up with the increase in the costs of benefits, employees that have dependents now pay a portion of medical benefits. Single employees are fully covered because they are under that figure.

Shen said the City is different in that sense because they decided about seven years ago that all employees will pay some portion of their benefits.

Shen said she is meeting with the City Manager to discuss a resolution for City Council for the League of Cities Healthy Heal program on healthy eating. This might be an area where the City can partner with the District. Caswell said Greendell Principal Sharon Keplinger has said that by kids learning about healthy eating and parents coming into the classroom and hearing about healthy eating has changed their eating habits at home. Shen said there is a great non-profit group called Collective Roots that does a lot work in East Palo Alto; they plant gardens and get the kids involved in cooking healthy.

Caswell said both of the District's employee groups use Kaiser and Palo Alto Medical Foundation, do they have direct conversations on how they can improve their services? Bowers said they do have those conversations. Kaiser comes in and gives a presentation on the wellness program. Palo Alto Medical Foundation has wellness programs too but they do not have the bandwidth to get them to create a program for 2,000 employees.

Kniss said as a resource, the County has a wellness program but she is hearing the District would need a person that will run the wellness program? Bowers said yes, they need a person that can focus on this on a day to day basis. Employees are currently well served and have all the programs they need but it is about accessing the services and bringing them to their employees.

Shen said Palo Alto Medical Foundation and Kaiser might be willing to come to the District and City to put on a health fair and market what they offer. They are both very open to coming in and doing events. Caswell said this might be a good opportunity to share this with PTA and perhaps they can help with this.

District Enrollment Report

The District's Chief Business Officer Cathy Mak presented on the following slides:

- Enrollment Summary Grades K-5
- Enrollment Summary Grades 6-8
- Enrollment Summary Grades 9-10-11-12
- Grade Span Growth Summary Growth from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014
- Enrollment Growth Forecast vs. 14th Day Enrollment Growth

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- K-5 Class Size Average Comparison 2009-2010 through 2013-14
- Ethnic, Racial, Gender, Distribution
- 2013-14 K-5 14th Day Overflows
- Elementary Growth By Attendance Area
- Current Available Elementary Classrooms
- Next Steps

Mak explained this was the second year they saw a drop in kindergarten enrollment due to the age law that went into effect in 2012. Caswell said yes but even if those students were rolled back in, they are still down in enrollment. There are a lot of assumptions to why that might be; some families might have decided to take their children to private school for that year or other reasons.

Caswell said they are expecting the next three years of middle school to be tight but if they look at K, 1st, and 2nd grade, it might not last beyond three years. It gives them a short term challenge to make sure the middle schools are well served and opening a new middle school because they do not know if this will be a consistent trend. Kniss asked if these kids were born in the early 2000? Caswell said yes but it's hard to look at birth rate since they had all the new housing developments in Palo Alto bringing in more families.

Caswell said in the last two years enrollment has been slowing down. They do not believe growth will continue going down because there is still building going on, there is the ABAG pressure, and Stanford is going complete a lot of housing that will place a lot of student pressure on the District. They have a little softness right now and can use that to make decisions about opening a 13th elementary school.

Kniss asked if Hoover and Ohlone are both choice schools? Caswell said yes.

Caswell said they will have a Study Session on November 5 to discuss next steps on the opening of the 13th elementary school.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Future Meetings and
Agendas
Adjournment