

**SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
May 24, 2012**

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Thomas Newmeyer, William Ziegler, Shirley Thornton, Ed. D.,
Karen Benjamin and Mark Trotter
Superintendent: Valerie Pitts, Ed. D.

President Thomas Newmeyer called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The agenda order was approved.

PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD PRIOR TO CLOSED SESSION

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board and Superintendent convened closed session at 5:01 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Open session reconvened at 5:20 p.m.

Report Out from Closed Session

President Newmeyer announced that, in closed session, the board had approved an agreement with MCOE for technology services.

STUDY SESSION

Discussion of Isolation and Race Issues

Stephen Chang, Colm Davis and Victor Cary, National Equity Programs, gave a Power Point presentation, Sausalito Marin City School District Board Meeting May 24, 2012:

- Our Mission
- Community Agreements
- Agenda
- The Problem We Need to Solve
- Opportunity Gap
- How the Opportunity Gap is Constructed
- Universal Goals, Targeted Approaches
- A Wicked Problem
- Pair Share
- What is Needed
- Facilitated Discussion

Discussion

Ray Menaster: Why [are we having this discussion] now?

President Newmeyer: Action Team (A Team) discussions led to this during discussion of moving Bayside from Sausalito to Marin City.

Trustee Thornton: This is nothing new; discussion has been needed since World War II.

What are the groups in Marin City? Demographics are changing; the Pacific Rim and Latino communities are growing.

Ray Menaster: When we go to community meetings, we always wonder where a representative from the school district is. Superintendent Pitts offered to attend.

Trustee Trotter: In the hour allotted for discussion, we need to stay focused on the racial issue; we have a 98% low income population of kids; the majority is African American. There has been discussion of moving those kids to Marin City, which increases segregation; what is best for addressing the opportunity for those kids?

Felicia Gaston: There were discussions held at the time MLK was built; that was the board's ultimate intention then - to move them all to Marin City. I think the board is now making it a bond issue and plans to finalize it now. Trustees Trotter and Thornton: That was not the plan; we needed a middle school.

Felicia Gaston: What are you pushing? A bond?

President Newmeyer: The board needs a decision in June; there is no consensus of the board at this time to proceed. District dynamics are changing: WCA growth and decreasing revenues from the state. Status quo is not sustainable. There is no easy answer on race; Bayside is not as integrated as WCA, so both Bayside and MLK are segregated already.

Felicia Gaston: What about the bus?

Trustee Trotter: The bus is a \$50-100,000 annual expense – an economic issue. With school here, there is no need for a bus.

Ethel Seiderman: Why sell integration to save the cost of the bus?

Unidentified Woman: As WCA goes up, district expense goes up. Charter schools are not to have an incursion on the public school system. Trustee Ziegler: The charter is a public school.

President Newmeyer: Come to every board meeting; this is very complex; a lot of this is being explained along the way.

Trustee Thornton: We went from the education of children to what fiscally can we afford? Keeping two schools open with 120 kids is not sustainable; we need two K-8 schools and what does that mean? There are concerns for real estate - Bayside was a Title 1 and Distinguished School, which we didn't get the kudos for – it was business as usual – even though our children were achieving, there was no celebration.

Unidentified Man: How will children who live in Marin City public housing be distributed?

Fran Nelson: Superintendent Pitts and the board passed the concept of International Baccalaureate; whether it will draw from other communities is uncertain. It will be difficult to maintain the perception of equality between Marin City and WCA; how will kids integrate into high school and into the greater community?

Superintendent Pitts: As a member of the entire county education community, if integration is the right thing, why haven't we focused on that? There are a lot of opportunities to share. Is it better to save this tiny district or is it better to integrate with a slightly larger district? No Marin district is very big.

Johnathan Logan, Jr.: Every school district in Marin is mono-cultural. What is the best academic program? How do we create the best academic opportunity for our kids in Bayside and MLK? There will always be race issues.

Ricardo Moncrief: It seems like there is an economic mandate for segregation; is there a political mandate? Has the community been polled?

Unidentified Man: You can't vote for segregated schools.

Trustee Thornton: There are no students from Sausalito attending Bayside.

Ray Menaster: In 1970s, Mill Valley sent students here; there is already a history.

Ellen Franz: We [Bayside] are already a segregated school; kids talk about the difference in what they see at Bayside and WCA and it doesn't feel empowering.

Marsha Bonner: What will it take to try to orchestrate integration?

Trustee Trotter: This feels like failure to me; we are already a segregated district; we are at 700 and WCA is at 900, which dictates where Sausalito will send its children. It's about academics for me; how do we get Bayside & MLK to be 900 schools? We've been working at this for ten to twelve years. My gut feeling is that segregation is not the answer but we are hearing a lot of opinions – what does the community want?

Johnathan Logan, Jr: In reality parents aren't going to send their kids here; accept Interdistrict Transfer requests. It is painful to get bogged down in discussion of race; we need to talk about program.

Trustee Benjamin: I looked up the demographics of WCA (she read them to the group). It is not an all white school but includes many races with the highest number being Latino/Latina.

Felicia Gaston: A bond decision needed in June.

Trustee Benjamin: A bond is needed for more than 1 M in deferred maintenance.

Trustee Trotter: We cannot create a K-8 in Marin City without a bond because we don't have a school that will facilitate that here.

President Newmeyer: Two small isolated schools don't justify the program. I'd rather see Spanish, Art, and PE than a school bus. It is too much for teachers to run back and forth all day; we need a comprehensive program that really works.

Felicia Gaston: What will happen in September?

President Newmeyer: A bond doesn't even get funded until next February.

Trustee Trotter: It would take a couple of years to achieve the construction goals.

Stephen Chang: Fiscal problem/opportunity/ isolation and segregation – they don't line up; it will take a lot of work to figure out how to balance that. How do you ensure opportunities to students and families to get the outcomes desired? You have unique, practical and geographical issues.

Trustee Ziegler: A community school in Marin City would be a plus; the community will benefit from that. WCA has the reputation of a community school by creating that environment; it can happen here when you have the program in place and it is in your own backyard. It is not a race issue but a community issue; the culture of education is critical to a community school; if you felt the school was your own rather than that you were shipped over here. How will this community change if we do this?

Victor Carey: It is an interesting challenge, a problem since the shipyards; a geographical divide. There are good examples of high achieving segregated schools; we have re-segregated across the country. The movement now is corporate and charter school movements. You have resources, albeit diminishing, that give you options.

Unidentified Woman: Segregation is not the problem but the resources given to the students; is this board going to make decisions that are equal? Students need to feel worthy; they need more beauty. What we provide shouldn't be separate. Children do better in segregated schools (families know one another). Be fair.

Trustee Thornton: If we evolve into K-8, how does the question of equity and equality remain on top?

Trustee Benjamin: IB is for Bayside/MLK; improving facilities is for this community –improving MLK and its field; the new teachers mentioned are for here, not for WCA. There is no IB anywhere else in Marin; teachers are and will be committed – this staff is so dedicated. We are trying to bridge what students get at TAM and Redwood; come to the meetings and learn what they are doing. Teachers need to be applauded. Unless you see that, you have an old mindset; it is not what it was five years ago, not three years ago.

Terrie Green: We need policies, top-notch program and staff, and budget. We need to balance the money and have policies that the community agrees with before going for a bond.

Unidentified Woman: Teachers came to the community to seek parent coalition because they didn't have the support of the board.

Jonnette Newton: Staff is extremely dedicated; the issues we face in our schools are due to poverty, serious social issues, and race issues -yes; we need to be teaching behaviors, emotional social skills; we need community and parents' help. There are other community events to attend but there is a lot going on at the schools that we are already committed to. Diversified staff – we are always looking, we get lots of applications but receive few diversified; it is not apparent why people are not coming to us. Tenisha

Tate [Assistant Principal] went to a special place to recruit. Training – we have IB training and IB school visits for our teachers; they are looking continuously at how to do things smarter. The board is supporting a STRONGER program; our kids need to think we are supporting them.

Bettie Hodges: Race is our issue when school board members feel better sending their children to the charter school instead of the public schools, it's disingenuous. We need a school board with a moral compass to not just be paternal but actually do something for Marin City. A gym in Sausalito is expensive. It is hard for us to listen to you and have us believe it when your own kids attend school at the charter school.

Ricardo Moncrief: Mental health issues translate into the classroom.

President Newmeyer: Bettie hit it on the head – how can we trust the board? I can talk till I'm blue but it won't do any good; at the end of the day, there will be a ton of distrust. With everyone coming from a different place, it will be difficult to achieve trust. Bayside and MLK have more of the funds; WCA has less and three times the kids.

Forrest Corson: I was a waterfront kid, here my entire life. The 101 overpass is the dividing line and always has been; the line is drawn and no one wants to bend it. None of the three communities have ever melded but the kids don't care. Diversity is better if we can make it support the children.

Trustee Thornton: African Americans came with the belief of a protestant work ethic, wanting to be accepted, and we were not.

Stephen Chang: Most communities have a geographical dividing line; what are you willing to do about it? How do we become successful and what do we put together to allow the community to come together.

Pam Dake: Conversation is a beginning; I am urging more discussions like this. Staff doesn't reflect the population; students need role models. NCLB is mean-spirited, boring, rote learning if the expectation at home is that you will go to higher education. Kids need extracurricular things that make life fun and they should not hate to go to school. MLK has not had quality education over the years.

K Adams: I am a lifelong resident; it has changed; there is still a race issue. I hate to see such a tense atmosphere for everybody; I like different races. There is crime everywhere. It's a bit much- as a parent, what do I need to do to give my kids the best education? Students have achieved/excelled here.

Final Community Reflections:

Sharon Turner: I've worked in Marin City a number of years, watched board changes, watched kids going to high school unprepared. Bring our kids home; have a community school program; have a robust program that prepares us to compete. We don't have a transition program for the current 8th grade class; I don't want another class to go by the wayside.

Terrie Greene asked Nancy Johnson to convene a meeting in Marin City for a community discussion so the community can come back to the board with some recommendations.

Unidentified Man: How will the kids feel when they're pushed back over here?

Bettie Hodges: Community schools are great but the question is not of model. The board has been discussing options for more than a year; will people come from Sausalito to Marin City? I would like to see an option to integrate.

Unidentified Woman: Charter school parents need to raise funds; you continue to drain resources to support the charter school. Put a cap on it; the board may have to make a decision to stop expansion of WCA.

Susan Cassidy: I have been in this district many years, the issue stopping everything from moving forward is that it is not a coordinated effort; everyone wants their kids in a good school – it feels like we are a bunch of parts that come together and collide; bring it all together, be honest.

Ricardo Moncrief: Twenty nine students had high blood pressure; there's no telling what influence this has on them; we need perhaps three years to bring them up to par.

Final Board Reflections:

Trustee Trotter: I agree with Principal Newton; we are up against poverty; that is the main thing. Kids need more resources because there are not enough resources at home. Mr. Trotter used homework as an example, saying that it is difficult to find enough time to help an individual student with homework in a two parent family; it is even more difficult in a single parent household.

Trustee Thornton: Race is the issue; poverty is a part of that; we have to believe in the children enough to make them want to learn.

Trustee Ziegler: I agree with Shirley Thornton; we need to make practical decisions; the board has to establish a program that really works. If Willow Creek Academy were gone tomorrow, you still would have this population; we cannot improve it financially unless we establish the program and transition – bite the bullet and take action. FSG started with us over a year ago; we've taken first steps. We need to take major steps now to get a bond in November; the opportunity is now; keep talking but don't lose time by losing the opportunity to get the bond now.

President Newmeyer: Discussion is a process; it never has an ending. We have a good manager in place in Valerie Pitts; hear her guidance and recommendations; we at least have a shot at success; the way it is now, I don't think we have that shot.

Superintendent Pitts thanked everyone for participating in the meetings. She feels honored and blessed to be here for these conversations. She makes commitment to look at what more she can do; she feels the board is committed. She wants to do what's best for the entire community; wants to turn what she hears into actions, which will not happen overnight.

A five minute recess was taken.

REGULAR SESSION

Pledge of Allegiance

Trustee Thornton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD PRIOR TO OPEN SESSION

There was no public comment.

RECOGNITION

Board members acknowledged and presented certificates of achievement to:

- **District Outstanding Teacher of the Year:** Ms. Susan Cassidy, Fifth Grade Teacher. Susan was on a camping trip with students during celebration.
- **District Outstanding Classified Employee of the Year:** Ms. Shakona Bowie, Paraprofessional Ellen Franz accepted on her behalf.
- **MLK First Place Winners of the Marin Eco Top Chef Competition:** MLK students Ayana Woodard, Avossia Agbonkonkon, Luna Beltran and Romeo Beltran, guided by teacher, Natasha Griffin, were acknowledged for their achievement.

Assistant Principal Sandie Spoering described the Marin Eco Top Chef Competition, an event held on May 19. Seventh and eighth grade students from eight middle schools each worked with Marin chefs to create a menu adaptable to a school lunch. Judges were impressed that MLK students used vegetables from their school garden. The award, an antique skillet, will have the school's name engraved on it. Ayana Woodard was in attendance at the board meeting; certificates of achievement were issued by the board for each student.

FACILITIES

Discussion of Facilities Bond/Community Input

Superintendent Pitts introduced Mark Pressman of Wulff Hansen & Co, who discussed:

- Bonding capacity of the district; 29,416,591
- Estimated tax per \$100,000 of assessed value
- Fifty-five% vote requirement to pass a bond in November
- Current low interest rates would equate to more proceeds from the bond
- If passed in November, bond would be issued around February.

Bond Consultant, Tara Sullivan, was introduced to talk about what the district can do pre-bond decision and what the district can do once a decision is made:

- Talk to constituents
- Determine what the bond will look like
- Fifty-five% vote requirement also requires that some of that be written into the bond language
- Develop a communication piece to all voters about the board's decision, what the problems are, be transparent; consensus will be the base of the address
- Visit groups
- Imperative for board to move along; consensus on the board is preferable; give direction as to where the money will go
- Final date for placement on November ballot is August 10
- Make decisions far ahead so there is time to talk to the community why this is best
- Every voter is aware the economy is not currently going well; Marin has historically supported education
- Campaign begins when bond language is decided
- Be visible

- Voters with no relation to school outnumber families with children attending school here
- Prepare a mailing to voters in tandem with visiting community organizations
- Visit a good cross-representation of the district
- Presidential election ensures high voter turnout
- Educate public as to the need and what the solution is.

Forrest Corson, Director of Maintenance and Operations, gave a Power Point presentation titled, Bond Project List, which included:

- Proposed projects for 630 Nevada Street
- Proposed projects for 200 Phillips Drive
- Proposed projects District Wide (Bus and Maintenance Yard)
- Bonding Capacity
- Estimated Tax per \$100,000 of Assessed Value

REPORTS

Newmeyer/Benjamin/all to amend the agenda to remove Items 12-15

Principal Jonnette Newton showed a video of SMC children learning, field trips, classroom visitors, outdoor education, music education, athletics, sportsmanship, Student Council, competitions, shopping at a local farmers' market and mosaic camp.

PROVIDE SAFE, HEALTHY, POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

After School Program Report – Year End

MLK Assistant Principal, Sandie Spoering, reported that Study Island was introduced in the 2011/2012 school year. At year-end, a proposal is being considered to weave academic intervention through the school day and have a later end time at MLK. It has proven more successful to have academic intervention throughout the day rather than after school.

Trustee Benjamin registered her disappointment that community members had not stayed to hear all the positive things going on in the schools.

Required Update to Tobacco Free Schools and Tobacco Policies

M/s/c Trotter/Benjamin/all to approve the revised Board Policy/Administrative Regulations 3513.3-Tobacco-Free Schools and Board Policy 5131.62-Tobacco

MAINTAIN SOUND FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND OPERATIONS

District Budget 2012/2013: Governor's May Revise Proposals and District Multi-Year Projections

Business Manager, Paula Rigney, reported that due to the lateness of the hour and because the budget continues to be revised daily, discussion will be deferred until the special board meeting on May 31.

Willow Creek Academy 2012/2013 Preliminary Budget

Due to the lateness of the hour, WCA Treasurer, Clark Warden, reported that the preliminary budget continues to be revised and will be ready for discussion in June.

CONSENT AGENDA

M/s/c- Roll Call Trotter/Benjamin/ Ayes 5 Noes 0 to approve the consent agenda:

- Consolidation of Election: Approval of Resolution #661 proposing an election be held in its jurisdiction; requesting the Board of Supervisors to consolidate with any other election conducted on November 6, 2012; and requesting election services by the registrar of voters.
- Minutes of the regular meeting of April 19, 2012
- Minutes of the special meeting of April 21, 2012
- Minutes of the special meeting of April 26, 2012
- Minutes of the special meeting of May 10, 2012
- Minutes of the special meeting of May 16, 2012
- Payments of Warrants
- Extension of Agreement of Participating School Districts in Marin Re: Interdistrict Attendance Agreements
- Marin Schools Insurance Authority (MSIA) Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Agreement
- County Wide Expulsion Plan 2012

ADJOURNMENT

M/s/c Thornton/Ziegler/all to adjourn at 9:05p.m.

 8/23/12

 Signature/Date

President

Title

FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

- Consolidated Application Part 1
- Authorizations to Sign
- Strategic Priorities Review

SAVE THE DATES

Future District Meeting Dates

All meetings are held at the District Office, 200 Phillips Drive, Marin City at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. *The first meeting date of each month will be allocated to additional special meetings on facilities issues, special meetings, community forum, etc. as needed. The only or second meeting date of each month will be allocated to regular board meetings.

2011/2012 School Year

June 14 Two meetings in June

June 28

2012/2013 School Year

July 26 One July meeting due to Summer Break

August 9*

August 23

September 13*

September 27

October 11*

October 25

November 15 Third Thursday; one November meeting due to Holidays

December 6*	First Thursday due to Holidays
December 13	Second Thursday due to Holidays
January 10*	
January 24	
February 14*	
February 28	
March 14*	
March 28	
April 18*	Third Thursday due to Spring Recess
April 25	
May 09*	
May 23	
June 13	Two meetings in June
June 27	

Future Charter School Board Meeting Dates

Meetings are open to the public and generally held on the school campus, 33 Buchanan Street, Sausalito. With the exception of the December meeting, meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.
June 20

Upcoming Dates and Important Events

Please visit the District website www.smdsd.org