

**SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
June 21, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE**

Board Members Present: Caroline Van Alst, William Ziegler, Thomas Newmeyer, Joshua Barrow,  
Ida Green

Superintendent: Bob Ferguson

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Board and Superintendent convened closed session at 5:31 p.m.

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Open session reconvened at 6:25 p.m.

**REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION**

Trustee Van Alst announced that no action was taken in closed session.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Trustee Green led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ORDER**

The agenda order was approved.

**TRUSTEE REPORT**

Trustee Newmeyer said the graduation ceremony was very well organized and an inspiring event. Trustee Green said that students gave stirring performances at the step-up ceremony the next day; it was also a wonderful celebration.

**DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Alan Rothkop said that the summer cleanup is well underway. All the summer programs taking place at Bayside MLK have been assigned a space and are ready to start. He reported that there was a vandalism incident where some kids broke into the garden shed and took some latex paint which they threw all over the basketball court. Someone also broke a window trying to get into the annex building. Police reports have been filed for both incidents, he said.

**PRINCIPAL**

Principal Newton welcomed Dr. Chappelle Griffin to his new post as the principal of Bayside MLK Jr. Academy. Dr. Griffin thanked the board for the opportunity to speak and said that everyone in the district has given him a warm welcome. He added that his family has now moved up from southern California and is getting acclimated to their new home in Novato. At the school, he has been interviewing candidates for several teaching positions. He also echoed the trustees' sentiments regarding the graduation and step-up ceremonies and praised Ms. Newton's efforts. "I have some really big shoes to fill", he concluded.

## **WILLOW CREEK ACADEMY**

Jeff Knowles, president of the Willow Creek Academy Board of Trustees, said that Tara Seekins will be the head of school as of July 1, replacing Royce Conner who is leaving his post next week. Mr. Knowles said that he would like to address some perceptions about WCA in the areas of the school's demographics, its budget, its history and its Memoranda of Understanding with the district. One line of thinking is that WCA is "the affluent, white school", he said. He continued: This is a school with no racial majority, where 19 different first languages are spoken. Out of a projected 398 enrollment for next year, 198 will be "high need" per State funding rules. We would like to be seen as part of the district and a partner with Bayside MLK Jr. Academy. Given the numbers of children from this district that we are educating, that is how we should be viewed.

Turning to the Memorandum of Understanding with the district, he said: This is a five-year agreement that runs concurrent with the WCA charter. This district is fortunate to be a "Basic Aid" one, which means that property taxes give us over \$2.5 million more in revenue than we would receive if we were a "Revenue Limit" district. Historically, a lion's share of the excess property tax revenue has gone to Bayside MLK. Two years ago, when the MOU was up for renewal, we decided to settle the issue of allocation and simplify it. We agreed that for the first two years, funding for WCA would be flat at \$7100 per student. That was a pretty big concession. For the third through fifth years, excess property taxes would be allocated based on the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the needs-based formula used by the State. The district's concession to WCA was to undertake to share equally any rise over 2% in property taxes, and not to levy fees on the school for facilities and special education, beyond the 3% customarily charged for oversight. For the coming year, funding for Bayside MLK will be about \$13,800 per student, while WCA will receive \$7800. It is true that WCA has many programs that Bayside MLK does not offer. The reason is not that we receive a disproportionate share of revenues, but because our teachers make less money. Going forward, there are two issues: Does the excess in property taxes get shared equitably, and secondly, how do we share the burden of higher costs due to a rise in state-mandated minimum allocations per student? We can look at cutting some of our centralized costs in facilities and overhead. We can emphasize early intervention to cut costs in special education. We can share efficiencies, expertise and knowledge, and get away from the current us vs. them mindset.

Trustee Green asked about the number of out-of-district students at WCA. Tara Seekins said that there currently 74 such students. Mr. Knowles said that WCA must take all comers, provided it has room. Once at capacity, it must turn to a lottery system, under which in-district students get preference.

## **SUPERINTENDENT**

Superintendent Ferguson said he would like to address some of his concerns after four months at the district. He continued: I have worked in four districts as superintendent, and I have never seen the level of mistrust that is prevalent in this district. I also see a lot of negativity and finger pointing. I want to say that we are well aware of the problems; what we need are solutions to make this the best school for our children. To achieve this, the community and district must be in the same boat and pulling in the same direction. The anger and frustration about the past are real and justified; now we need to put our

energies into today, acknowledge our mistakes and move forward. We have two schools in this district, with more Marin City kids at Willow Creek Academy than at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy. It's time to stop pointing to the evil empire over there. We can work together with WCA to save money and help our children. We can't ignore the fact that some of our middle schoolers are not performing at grade level. We have to hire the best teachers and administrators and share information with the community, as we have started to do. We have the resources – it's a matter of using them correctly. Together, we can make major changes. If we fight each other, we will fail.

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Marilyn Mackel, a community member and school volunteer, said: I would like to thank Principal Newton, Assistant Principal Dr. Thornton and Art Teacher Ellen Franz for the extraordinary job they have done in teaching our children and improving their behavior. They have always had the best interest of our students at heart and gone well beyond the scope of their duties to help them achieve academically and improve their behavior and attendance. Thank you Ms. Newton, Dr. Thornton and Ms. Franz; I appreciate all that you have done.

#### **Roll Call Ziegler/Newmeyer/All to approve the following consent agenda item:**

Minutes of the May 31, 2016 Board Meeting

#### **INTERDISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT**

Superintendent Ferguson said every district in the County takes part in this agreement to ensure that interdistrict transfers are handled uniformly for all students.

Trustee Barrow said the policy refers to junior and high school levels; this should be taken out. Further, we have never reviewed the terms and conditions for revocation of transfers, as mentioned in the policy. Trustee Van Alst said that the policy would be brought to the board for review, separately from the current agreement.

**Newmeyer/Green/4 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 abstain to approve the Interdistrict Attendance Agreement**

#### **Discussion of Superintendent Hiring Process**

Superintendent Ferguson said that we are including the community in these discussions. We have a good representation of the community which has agreed to be part of the interview process. We will bring their names to the Board at the 6/28 board meeting.

#### **2016-2017 Willow Creek Academy Budget Acceptance**

Trustee Van Alst asked that the WCA budget acceptance item be moved up in the agenda.

**Green/Newmeyer/all to move the 2016-2017 Willow Creek Academy Budget Acceptance item**

Clark Warden said that the school is projecting an enrollment of 398 for next year. Revenues are expected to be about \$60,000 lower, while expenses are up by \$240K, mainly due to LCAP requirements. No revenue sharing above LCFF requirements have been included in these calculations, he said.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Marcella Alexis-Addae said WCA is the school that it is because of parent and teacher initiative. WCA wanted to be a community school since its inception. Here, relationships have become as important as the curriculum and learning. The learning opportunities are there because of collaboration between parents and school and a desire to go beyond budgetary constraints, seek grants, donors and partnerships. Please consider the possibility of our two schools working together in seeking grants and donations to benefit all our children, she told the Board.

Pam Dake said that she appreciated the offer of collaboration from WCA. Bayside MLK Jr. Academy needs help to raise funds, as it does not have the same resources and contacts. I urge both schools to team up, she said.

Marijke Smit said that she was here to advocate for the adoption of the WCA budget.

Alexandra Cantin said we should be proud of our district. It has extraordinary diversity, a wonderful food program and good teachers. She continued: I am here to support the WCA budget. The special education program has benefited my daughter and the after-school program has allowed me to hold down a job.

Trustee Barrow said: I am a little confused by the advocacy for the WCA budget. Tonight, the Board is working on the adoption of the Bayside MLK Jr. Academy budget. This Board only approves and does not adopt the WCA budget.

Trustee Ziegler said that the advocacy may be due to a sense of insecurity among WCA parents. Trustee Newmeyer said that in the wake increased activity leading up to the LCAP and budget adoption, WCA parents simply wanted to be heard.

### **Ziegler/Newmeyer/All to Accept the 2016-2017 Willow Creek Academy Budget**

At 7:46 p.m., Trustee Van Alst said that the Board would take a short break. The Board reconvened the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

### **2016-2017 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Adoption – Action**

Superintendent Ferguson said the first draft of the LCAP was brought to the Board at its last meeting. He continued: Tonight you will see the changes that followed your comments. Art, music and PE are part of the curriculum. Goal 1 is on the topic of a Community School. There were not many comments on this subject, so this goal has not changed. I understand that \$30K is not enough for a community school coordinator. This is seed money to start the process of seeking grants and partnerships. For example, there is a model program at the Redwood City school district that we can visit. This allocation will start us on the path.

Superintendent Ferguson said that some of the objectives are admittedly difficult to measure. MCOE Deputy Superintendent Terena Mares said there are metrics for all the objectives, and that her office

will be looking at those when going over the LCAP. Trustee Barrow said he would prefer to see the attendance rate goal held at its current level rather than increased every year. Trustee Newmeyer said it is good to be aspirational and aim for a 3% yearly increase. Trustee Van Alst said we can adopt the goal with the caveat that we bring it back on July 12 for further changes and re-adoption. Trustee Barrow asked about the fundraising goal in the first year. Superintendent Ferguson said our priority is to have the components of the community school in place. Trustee Ziegler said we need a bigger conversation about fundraising - we need a grant writer. Superintendent Ferguson said he would talk to the new superintendent about that position.

Gail Henrickson said: There are two areas of major concern in this LCAP. There is no counselor and no trauma program. I don't believe a school psychologist should be charged with providing counseling or trauma care. Superintendent Ferguson said that the community school program will provide wraparounds services, including trauma services. How we do it will be determined later. Trustee Barrow said we need a specific plan to address the trauma and counselor issues. Superintendent Ferguson said that as we move through the process, those issues will be addressed.

Turning to Goal 2, Student Achievement, Superintendent Ferguson said that after listening to the community, the district made several changes. Music will expand to become a K-8 subject and support for the arts will increase to \$45K. To save on benefit costs, we will use a contractor rather than hire employees. For the library, we will work with the Mill Valley library's credentialed librarian to oversee our program and keep our current library technician. In PE, we have a good PE teacher who is not credentialed. We will have a credentialed person to observe him, so that he can continue to provide instruction and continuity for our students. The \$6800 allotted to intervention is not for the whole program, but to provide staff development for our teachers so that they can learn about Response to Intervention (RTI).

Gail Henrickson said action 26 in Goal 2 is to help families and students to transition to high school. How was the decision made to hire a student intervention facilitator at \$83,400 when we need a counselor and a trauma program? Amy Prescott of MCOE said that this goal is describing an already existing position.

Bettie Hodges said she was not aware that such a position existed at the school. She continued: The issue of students' transition to Tam is a problem in this community. I am not sure if the current job description for the intervention facilitator aligns with the duties that go with that position. This is a position that could be folded into the community coordinator's duties.

Dr. Thornton discussed the counseling position. She said: We have talked about shoring up our programs and the need for our kids to perform academically. I am concerned that the position of assistant principal/teacher will not work for us. In the past two years, we have worked hard to build a culture of scholars. I sent letters out to parents every week, letting them know how their children were doing. We talked to students about their GPA and they responded positively-their work has improved. We must have someone there at all times to receive our children when they are sent out of the classroom. If the

assistant principal is teaching and the principal is with a parent, who will be there to talk to the student? I don't want to lose the expectations that we have put into the hearts of our students. I don't want to see a slippage in their achievements. Every parent is now aware when a student has a problem. We say that we want to build a relationship with our community – we need a body to do that. An assistant principal will not make that happen.

Gail Henrickson asked if something would be done to address Dr. Thornton's concerns. Superintendent Ferguson said: We would have to give up something to get that extra position of counselor. My concern is that 7th and 8th graders are not performing at grade level. My focus is on academics.

Barbara Killey said that she has worked with some 5th and 6th graders here. Unlike many of their peers elsewhere, they all know their GPA and are vested in their education. She thanked the Board for increasing funding for the arts and said that the Center for Excellence will work to augment that program. Looking at last year's second interim budget vs. this year's proposal, she said that she sees a \$.5 million decrease in the funds allocated to direct services to students while non-direct services have increased by over \$400K. Why did this happen? There are 144 reasons to raise the direct services, she said. Trustee Van Alst thanked her for pointing this out and said she would look into the matter.

Glenda Gentry there is a rich set of resources for providing visual and performing art instruction in schools. Please let the increases be just the beginning. Look for partnerships and engage with the California Arts Project. Also consider working with the Center for Excellence. I want to volunteer as a resource for the district, she told the Board.

Trustee Barrow said several issues remain outstanding. The district should embrace the arts standard as specified by the State. The LCAP has 0 dollars for foreign language instruction in year 1, which is the planning stage; but it also has 0 dollars for year 2. We should look at this goal again. We should use the baseline assessment data we have from last year and set targets for next year. Where data exists, we should use it, he emphasized. Further, if we see that some of our students are missing proficiency standards by one or two answers, that is good progress. We want proficiency, but we also want to close the achievement gap. Are our teachers on board with this plan – I can't tell by looking at this LCAP, he said. Superintendent Ferguson said when we look at proficiency level for each grade, we see that our students are struggling. This has to be our primary focus. Dr. Thornton said that teachers kept asking for a math specialist, but were not heard.

At 9:29, Trustee Ziegler left the meeting.

Turning to Goal 3, Parent Engagement, Superintendent Ferguson said no community concerns were expressed in this area. Trustee Barrow said the way actions 4 and 5 (Effective Communication Plan and District and School Website Updates) are worded and the amount of funding allocated to them should be examined. It feels as though we are not telling the story around the allocations, he said. Superintendent Ferguson said that 60% of the superintendent's salary is embedded in the allocation for action 4, and half of the assistant principal's salary, as well as technical support funds are included in

action 5. Trustee Barrow said that those duty allocations are not realistic and we should redirect the money to something more appropriate. Ms. Mares said it is not unusual to see a portion of the Superintendent's salary tied to actions in the LCAP in small school districts. Trustee Barrow said it would be preferable to tie those salaries to academic criteria and simply note the added duties in communication and website updates.

Superintendent Ferguson said in summary that we have gone through a condensed LCAP process since March. There is a lot more work to be done. We must add more clarity and make sure that the community continues to be involved. I hope that by September, we have a document that we can be proud of, he said.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Marilyn Mackel said that she had asked the WestEd representative whether there is a legal requirement that the district adopt the LCAP as developed and agreed upon by the community in consultation with the district. She continued: The answer was yes, but we are not doing that here. Research shows that students who receive full-time art instruction do better academically. When we talk about failures in math and literacy, without focusing on the arts, our children will continue to fail. This is particularly true in the case of minority, traumatized students. I will put my requests in the form of questions. Is it improper to ask that we use our reserves to provide the needed resources to our kids? Is it improper to ask that WCA contribute from its funds to the Bond? If you will not adopt the LCAP that this community approved, you are wasting their time.

Gail Henrickson said teachers, volunteers and staff at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy are working hard every day to give our students the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. With the grant from the Marin Community Foundation, we had single-subject teachers, academic support and enrichment programs. Scores were up, and so was morale. Now, once again, the potential for progress is within reach. The LCAP has allowed the community to give its input and give local solutions to local problems. As Bettie Hodges has stated, this school can be transformed into a great institution through the full implementation of the community school concept, reinstatement of elective choices and reinforcing creative expression. But this transformation cannot happen without the support of the Board. Without it, the community school and the new principal are bound to fail. It does not have to be this way. Imagine if there were cooperation instead of competition between our two schools. She told the Board: I implore you to look into your hearts and see if you are truly willing to work on behalf of the students and staff of Bayside MLK Jr. Academy and with this wonderfully engaged community. Your governance responsibilities call for you to either get behind this school and these kids, or to step aside and make room for others who will.

**Barrow/Newmeyer/3 ayes, 0 Noes, 1 absent, 1 abstain to approve the 2016-2017 Local Control Accountability Plan with the understanding that a revised version will be brought back to the board during the July 12, 2016 meeting**

**2016-2017 District Budget Adoption**

Trustee Van Alst said that this budget was presented at the last meeting and there have been no changes.

**Newmeyer/Barrow/ 3 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Abstain, 1 Absent, to approve the 2016-2017 District Budget**

**Resolution 733 - Authorization of Tax Anticipation (TAN)**

**Barrow/Newmeyer/4 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent to Approve Resolution 733 - Authorization of Tax Anticipation**

**Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 6153 – Instruction – School Sponsored Trips**

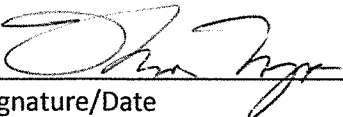
Trustee Van Alst said that she would like the policy further clarified to state that the Principal shall take all field trips to the Superintendent for approval by October 1 of each year. Superintendent Ferguson said that he would rewrite the policy for approval at the next meeting.

Trustee Van Alst said she would like to move the August meeting to August 2, 2016 to give the Board enough time to look at the LCAP before the MCOE deadline and discuss Bond matters

**Van Alst/Barrow/4 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent to approve the date for the new August 2, 2016 board meeting date**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Barrow/Newmeyer/4 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Absent to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 p.m.**

 7/12/16  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date

Secretary  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title