

LARKSPUR SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

August 30, 2007  
Hall Middle School Library  
200 Doherty Drive, Larkspur

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER** (Board President)

The regular meeting of the Larkspur School District Board of Trustees was called to order by Board President Michael Futterman at 4:30 p.m.

Trustees Present: Sally Blatt, Monica Bonny, Bruce Friedrichs, Michael Futterman, Kevin Mangan  
Management Present: Valerie Pitts, Becky White, Marilyn Clark, Daniel Norbutas

**II. APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION AGENDA**

M/s/c (Bonny-Mangan) to approve the Closed Session Agenda as presented.

AYES: Bonny, Mangan, Blatt, Friedrichs, Futterman

NOES: None

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION AGENDA**

None.

**IV. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION TO CONSIDER AND/OR TAKE ACTION UPON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S)**

The Board adjourned to Closed Session at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the following:

- (a) With respect to every item of business to be discussed in Closed Session pursuant to GC Section 54957: Public Employees – Classified - Job Description
- (b) With respect to every item of business to be discussed in Closed Session pursuant to GC Section 54957: Public Employees - Performance Evaluation: Superintendent

**V. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Report of Closed Session. The Board reconvened at 6:05 p.m. Board President Michael Futterman reported that the Board had met in Closed Session to discuss the items listed and took the following action:

- 1) Approved a new job description for a Lead Maintenance position; and
- 2) The Board approved the Superintendent's contract addendum.

**A. COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Superintendent's Report

Supt. Pitts commended staff for another smooth opening to school! She noted enrollment is up 1.91%, consisting of approximately 700 students at Neil Cummins (NC) and 472 at Hall. She announced she had participated in the following activities: a staff development conference in Seattle and staff development days at the sites, the PTA's new parent welcome, the welcome back coffee for staff at NC, and a Corte Madera Larkspur Schools Foundation meeting.

Supt. Pitts noted that there were no Williams Complaints for the quarter ending June 30, 2007.

2. Board Member Reports/Correspondence Addressed to the Board

- Trustee Mangan had attended: the new parent welcome and the Marin County Schools Board Association (MCSBA) kick-off event.
- Trustee Blatt had attended the August 13<sup>th</sup> Enrollment, Land Use and Facilities (ELF) meeting.
- Trustee Friedrichs had attended the welcome back breakfast for staff at Neil Cummins (NC).
- Trustee Bonny had checked in with the NC PTA and reported on the new landscaping--admired by many--and their lunch program, as well as the Hall PTA on its assignments.
- Trustee Futterman had also attended: the MCSBA kick-off, the ELF meeting, the new families welcome, and a meeting with the Mayor and Town Planner of Corte Madera to discuss facilities issues/options.

**B. PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**C. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

*Priority: Foster high levels of student achievement ....*

3. Summer School Report

Lexi Ahle, Summer School Coordinator, reviewed the program just completed via slideshow, highlighting the following:

- The mission of the program is to provide an extraordinary education to every child, and for many to not only catch up from the previous year, but to get a boost for the coming year.
- The program ran from June 19 to July 19; four days a week; 9:00A to 12:00P, resulting in a more focused, productive, and shorter day.
- Students recommended by teachers have priority enrollment, but all are welcomed to attend.
- The 10-class program ran for K-8, and included a special day and language development class.
- 90% of the teachers also teach for the District during the school year.
- The program focused on Language Arts and Math, with the goals being reading comprehension and writing.

Ms. Ahle concluded that it was a considered to be a successful summer by both teachers and students.

Everyone thanked her and the other staff for completion of a wonderful and successful program.

4. Homework Report

Principal Marilyn Clark stated that surveys, a presentation, and discussions with parents and staff had been conducted over the last few months. As a result, Neil Cummins will be continuing with the modified homework plan initiated late last school year, which focuses on reading, math facts, any work not completed during the school day, and special projects. She planned to report back after a bit more study and communication with staff, noting that the results may look different from grade to grade. She hoped to have the homework plans for each grade be consistent. Good progress has been made to date.

Principal Daniel Norbutas described staff's participation in developing a new plan, which started with a team defining the purpose of homework, in turn helping them develop new plans for time being spent on each subject per night. He provided the Trustees with the updated

policy, noting staff is committed to gathering additional data about student's homework experiences, as well as parent's perceptions of the experiences. He is considering conducting a random sampling, having both students and parents log actual time spent on homework. He would report back after that is completed.

The Trustees supported his idea of conducting random samplings and the idea of logging time spent, as well as appreciated both Principals taking the matter seriously and working diligently to construct appropriate guidelines. They asked for the Principals to return with their findings in December or January.

5. **Action: New Board Policy #1331: Bicycles, Skateboard, Roller Skates, etc. on campus**

Supt. Pitts reported that the new policy is driven by problems the sites have experienced after school and on weekends in terms of vandalism, and property damage, in particular caused by skateboarding. Therefore, she submitted a draft policy which would enable law enforcement to cite offenders. This would not preclude students from being able to use these modes of transportation from one area of the campus to another. It is meant to prohibit the causing of harm to people and property.

The Trustees corrected wording in the Policy and stated it should be returned at the next meeting for action. There was also a desire to encourage the wearing of helmets, which could be accomplished by adding a fine for not doing so. In addition, confiscation of the device (such as skateboards) from minors, with parents having to be contacted before it is returned would deter offenses. The Trustees hoped this Policy would also have positive safety implications as well as serve to prevent property damage.

Supt. Pitts stated she would work with the Police Department to see what could be done to address the suggestions and she would resubmit the Policy, incorporating changes as they suggest.

***Priority: Maintain the fiscal integrity of the district.***

6. **Action: Unaudited Actuals**

Business Manager Becky White gave a slide presentation of the 2006-07 unaudited financials and answered clarification questions from the Trustees.

Trustees Mangan and Friedrichs suggested that the carry-over funds be used for an air-conditioning system for the main building and asked Supt. Pitts to follow up on that suggestion.

M/s/c (Blatt-Friedrichs) to approve the Unaudited Actuals for 2006-07.

AYES: Blatt, Friedrichs, Bonny, Futterman, Mangan

NOES: None

***Priority: Develop a flexible long range plan to manage continued growth.***

7. **Discussion: Enrollment, Land Use and Facilities (ELF) Committee Update**

Supt. Pitts stated that at the last ELF meeting, estimated enrollment, facilities options, and the draft recommendation to the Board of Trustees was reviewed. The Committee decided to meet one or two more times before a final recommendation would be submitted in November; the next meeting is scheduled for September 17. That would also allow more time for better numbers on who will be enrolling as a result of the new San Clemente Place housing, which she currently anticipates will create a need for 1 to 2 more classrooms at Neil Cummins. She then provided the Trustees with the actual enrollment update. Supt. Pitts noted that they are staffing on a formula of either 20:1 (K-3) or 25:1 (4-8). At the next Board Meeting, she will also give a staffing report.

Jen Bernabei, parent, wanted everyone to step back and really study what they wanted in terms of education and what needed to be done to achieve that. She felt there might be momentum gaining for one of the options proposed, which she didn't necessarily believe to be the best solution.

Supt. Pitts noted that one of the recommendations of the ELF Committee is to move into a long-range planning process.

Trustee Bonny asked that at the next meeting the Trustees be provided class size numbers for every grade.

#### **D. GOVERNANCE TEAM ISSUES/PLANNING**

***Priority: Promote effective communications among the various constituencies ....***

##### **8. Discussion: Strategic Priorities/Goals Progress 2006-07**

Supt. Pitts stated that in a workshop last year, the Board met with administration and community members to review strategic priorities. They then followed that with work related to the benchmark goals. The district has met its goal of maintaining an Academic Performance Index of 900 or more. Regarding the California Standards Test, the district, for the most part, met its goal of 80% of children in each grade being proficient in language arts and math. The sites still had a year to achieve that for all grades; the goal is for 100%, but 80% is felt to be a reasonable percentage. She noted that staff is working on better ways to test proficiency. She then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the various grades' proficiency levels and the district's goals and related progress, as well as answered Trustee and parent clarification questions. A formal presentation on STAR testing and the Healthy Kids Survey results will occur at the next Board Meeting. Supt. Pitts also provided the Trustees with a handout of the vision staff had for the future, which she further explained. She announced that the Parent-Student Portal will soon be accessible to all, the website had recently been redesigned to be more user-friendly, PowerSchool is up and running, and ConnectEd and DataDirector will soon be available for use. Lastly, she reviewed the core values of the district.

The Trustees thanked Supt. Pitts for helping them continue to stay focused on the district's goals and strategic priorities.

##### **9. Discussion: Board Self-Evaluation**

Supt. Pitts stated that this is an annual process. The Board packet contains the results of the the previous year's evaluation.

Trustee Futterman feels the process is worthwhile, but since some of Trustees needed more time to complete the evaluation, he suggested this agenda item be postponed.

The Trustees agreed to have the evaluation turned in by the next Board Meeting, with the matter returning for discussion at the October Board Meeting.

#### **E. CONSENT CALENDAR**

10. Minutes: Regular Meeting of June 27, 2007
11. Minutes: Regular Meeting of August 6, 2007
12. Personnel Action 2007/08-01
13. Monthly Warrant Reports: 2006/07 – 95-97 and 2007-08 – 01-11

M/s/c (Mangan-Blatt) to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.

AYES: Mangan, Blatt, Bonny, Friedrichs, Futterman

NOES: None

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**

M/s/c (Bonny-Mangan) to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Pitts  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Mary Anne O'Keeffe  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent