

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING**  
San Marino Unified School District  
**1665 West Drive**  
**San Marino, CA 91108**

Tuesday, January 28, 2020  
**Board of Education**  
**Closed Session – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Regular Session – 7:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

1. **OPEN SESSION** 5:30 p.m.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT SECTION - CLOSED SESSION**

No comments were presented.

3. **CLOSED SESSION** 5:30 p.m.

- a. Conference with Legal Counsel - Anticipated Litigation (Govt. Code 54956.9) (4)
- b. Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation (Govt. Code 54956.9)(4)  
Student ID Numbers: XXXX8014, XXXX2064, XXXX1290
- c. Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation (Govt. Code 54956.9)(4)  
OAH Case No. 2019100076
- d. Public Employee Appointment (Government Code Section 54957 (b) (1).)  
Title: Certificated and Classified Management
- e. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal or Release (Govt. Code 54954.5(e)  
pursuant to Govt. Code 54957 (b)(1)) Title: Certificated, Classified, Confidential,  
Administrative
- f. Conference with Labor Negotiators (Govt. Code 54957.6)

4. **REPORT OF CLOSED SESSION**

The Board of Education took unanimous action in closed session to approve Settlement Agreement for OAH Case No. 2019100076.

The roll call vote was as follows:

|                     |        |                  |
|---------------------|--------|------------------|
| Mr. C. Joseph Chang | Aye    | Ayes: 4, Noes: 0 |
| Mrs. Lisa Link      | Aye    |                  |
| Mr. Chris Norgaard  | Aye    |                  |
| Mrs. Shelley Ryan   | Absent |                  |
| Mr. Corey Barberie  | Aye    |                  |

5. **REGULAR OPEN SESSION** 7:30 p.m.

6. **CALL TO ORDER**

Board members present were Mr. Corey Barberie, Mr. C. Joseph Chang, Mrs. Lisa Link, and Mr. Chris Norgaard. Mrs. Shelley Ryan and Student Board Member Grace Davis were excused.

Administrators present were Dr. Jeff Wilson, Dr. Stephen Choi, Mrs. Linda de la Torre, and Mr. Jason Kurtenbach.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with the modifications to defer the minutes to the February 11 agenda and to move the Board Communications section up after the Consent Items.

Moved for approval by Mr. Norgaard, seconded by Mrs. Link

Ayes: 4, Noes:  
Abstention: 0  
Preferential: 0

- c. Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes deferred to February 11, 2020.

## 7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- a. Communications from the audience regarding matters not on the agenda.

### **Public Comments:**

Ms. Marguerite Lindsay, President of CSEA, presented her comments to the Board regarding Measure S. She stated that the CSEA Chapter 120 realizes the importance of Bond measure S and announced that the Association is joining with the Yes on S committee in support of Measure S. CSEA wants to show continued support to their membership, the community, and students.

Ms. Lettie Aranda of SMTA presented her comments to the Board regarding Measure S. She announced that SMTA has voted in support of Measure S. She shared things that they know to be true, which included: SMTA is in support of safe working environments, SMTA is in favor of financial security and realizes as a bargaining unit that there is not much to work with, and SMTA understands that there are deferred maintenance and essential facility needs that will break the bank if Measure S is not passed. She indicated that within SMTA there are diverse opinions regarding management and decisions of past and present leaders, but clarified that the reservations are not related to the needs of the District but instead to the process and how things are presented or not. She reiterated that SMTA is in favor of Measure S and stated that it is important that the community understands that with the passing of Measure S the fiscal oversight, the checks and balances, rules, supports, etc., will all be in place. She stated it is very clear that a better affective filter needs to be provided so that every opinion can be expressed and valued and that evidence of meeting each need can be shown.

## 8. **PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. 2020-21 District Sunshine Proposal for Contract Negotiations between the San Marino Unified School District and the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Local Chapter #120

Mr. Steve Talt presented his comment to the Board regarding the Sunshine Proposals. He expressed his displeasure that the proposals were not included as public attachments on the agenda and made available prior to the meeting. Not making the proposals available makes it look like the District is trying to hide something and if the proposals are a means of contract negotiation, he believes they should be made available for public review. The public should be aware of how school start date decisions are made. He requested that if Sunshine is going to be used in terms of

contract negotiation that they be posted on the public agenda so that the public has an opportunity to come and comment before the Board.

b. 2020-21 District Sunshine Proposal for Contract Negotiations between the San Marino Unified School District and the San Marino Teachers' Association

No comments presented.

9. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. 2018-19 School Accountability Report Cards
- b. Budget Adjustments Report 2019-20 #6
- c. Certificated Personnel Documents
- d. Classified Personnel Documents
- e. Contracts and Agreements 2019-20 #16
- f. Donations Report 2019-20 #6
- g. Purchase Order Report 2019-20 #10
- h. SMHS Choir, Spring Break Choir Tour, Washington D.C., April 2-7, 2020
- i. SPORT2 Professional Development Curriculum and Instructional Services Contract
- j. Warrant Report 2019-20 #5
- k. Williams Settlement Quarterly Report on Uniform Complaints - 2nd Quarter 2019-20

Moved for approval by Mr. Norgaard, seconded by Mr. Barberie

Ayes: 4, Noes: 0  
Abstention: 0  
Preferential: 0

10. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

- a. Communications from the Superintendent

Dr. Jeff Wilson addressed concerns about the Corona Virus and stated that the District is doing everything it can to stay on top of the information. There are links on the front page of the District website that will be kept up-to-date with information as it is made available. School Nurse, Mr. Bob Judge was present and stated that there is only one confirmed case in Los Angeles.

Dr. Wilson announced the hiring of Ms. Amber Nuuvalli as the District's new Chief Communications Officer (CCO). After restructuring at the executive team level, the District received approval to hire a CCO. The position was posted nationwide and resulted in 27 applicants. Of those, 10 were moved to the interview process and then narrowed down to the one who stood out as the top choice.

Mrs. Linda de la Torre introduced Ms. Nuuvalli and welcomed her to the executive team. Ms. Nuuvalli holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications with an emphasis in Public Relations from Cal State Fullerton and a Juris Doctor from Chapman University. She joins the District with several years of experience in the legal field and a total of eight years in public relations. Her most recent experience was as the Public Information Officer at Arcadia Unified School District which is a model district for Communications. She will begin her assignment with the District on February 3.

Ms. Nuuvalli thanked the Board for the opportunity. She expressed with enthusiasm her passion for promoting student and teacher success and her excitement about joining SMUSD to continue building upon the District's reputation for excellence, forging robust relationships, and showcasing the wonderful things happening in the District. She introduced her Arcadia USD family who were present to support her.

**Board Comments:**

The Board welcomed Ms. Nuuvalli to the SMUSD family and thanked her guests from Arcadia for attending.

b. Budget Audit Report

Mrs. Linda de la Torre introduced Dr. Robert McEntire, Director, Management Consulting Services at School Services California (SSC), Inc. who provided a review of SSC's independent analysis of the District's finances. He gave an overview of the scope of work, which focused on the unrestricted side of the General Fund, and indicated that budgets and supporting documents were analyzed to determine the District's fiscal solvency and identify areas for improvement. He commended the District for providing requested information within a day, stating the response time is unheard of.

His presentation provided an overview of the analysis regarding: enrollment and ADA, LCFF and other revenues, expenditures, multi year projections, contributions to restricted programs including those escalating in special education, and cash flow and reserve issues.

SSC used a group of 19 school districts to compare finances, staffing, and teacher compensation. Overall comparisons illustrate that:

- The District ranks relatively low in LCFF revenue - (14 of 19) receiving 19.5% less per-ADA funding than the average of unified districts in the state.
- The District would be unable to provide the current level of student support without the generous support of the local community through donations and parcel taxes.
- The District has prioritized its investment in personnel, primarily in the number of staff members relative to its student population (3 of 19).
- The District has also prioritized investment in the contribution to employee health and welfare benefits (6 of 19).
- The District has minimized expenditures away from the school sites. Central office administration is lean (15 of 19).

He noted that in California's underfunded public education system, school districts must choose between paying each staff member well, or providing enough staff members to adequately serve their student population, recognizing that there is inadequate funding to do both.

Summary and cautions:

- The District should take action by the Second Interim Report to identify specific future-year expenditure cuts and program reductions that will be made to achieve the current expenditure reduction plan.
  - Early retirement figures need to be factored in.
  - The change in COLA figure from First to Second Interim needs to be factored in.
  - The First Interim Report identified specific positions that need to be addressed and dealt with by the Board.
- The District should exercise caution at the bargaining table in order to maintain an appropriate level of reserves.
- The District should develop contingency plans in case community donations decline.
- The District should prepare extended cash flow projections for the next 18 to 24 months to ensure that payroll and other obligations can be met.
- The District should endeavor to meet its own cash needs.
- Recommend having two months or 17% on reserve to cover payroll and other obligations. The District would need to have a balanced budget to build a reserve. Being in a COLA only environment makes it difficult to make realignments.
- Building up a fund balance is one time money.

- The District should keep an eye on the rate of growth in Special Education contributions as there is potential volatility and these are taking away from the general education classroom.
- There is growth far exceeding inflation in areas like health and welfare benefits, utilities, and Special Education. May want to beef up the assumption as a result of these growths.

#### **Board Comments:**

A Board member asked about the 0's in the 2010-23 columns for Special Ed transportation costs. Dr. McEntire indicated that there was an accounting change that rolled those expenses into a Special Education top line.

A Board member asked if Dr. McEntire has the backup information to support the student to teacher comparison ratios. Dr. McEntire indicated that the data is included in the report.

As a narrative, Dr. McEntire expressed his personal opinion regarding the District's need to replace the CBO. He stated that the retirement of a long tenured CBO creates a shift in districts. The make or break point is in whether or not the whole Executive Team (ET) understands the fiscal component. He believes the SMUSD ET does have the understanding and the ability to drive and meet the financial goals in the absence of a CBO. He stated that given the size of the District, having a CBO may not make sense any more.

Mrs. Linda de la Torre addressed the increasing contributions to Special Education and stated that it has been identified and is being addressed. The District is working with a Special Education consultant to audit the programs and recommend appropriate reductions while still meeting student needs. She indicated that declining enrollment is an issue state wide as is the increase in Special Education. It is predicted that state enrollment will continue to decline through 2028. Dr. Wilson indicated that early intervention and targeted intervention programs will be put in place by the District so that students don't get sent into IEP's too quickly. He anticipates seeing the number of Special Ed students being reduced in time due to the early intervention.

A Board member asked about the ability to find a district the size of SMUSD that is successful. Dr. McEntire indicated that there are similar districts in Northern California. They are trudging along by state and local taxes, no parcel taxes. The districts may appear to be doing well, but they do not have the option of service levels or compensation that SMUSD does. Overall the system is not working out well for them. There are 150-152 districts that are being beaten up by the LCFF.

A Board member referred to the student to teacher ratio of basic aid districts in the comparison and commented that it seems remarkable what the District has been able to do. Dr. McEntire confirmed, stating that it is amazing what the District has done year after year and that he has not seen it replicated anywhere else in the state.

The Board thanked Dr. McEntire for the excellent and comprehensive report.

#### **c. Recap of the Governor's Proposed State Budget for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year**

Dr. Robert McEntire presented an overview of Governor Newsom's proposed 2020-21 budget and its possible impact on K-12 education. On the positive side, he reported that there is a projected statutory COLA (cost of living allowance) of 2.29%, which will provide an increase in LCFF funding, and there are some increases to the LCFF funding formula for smaller class sizes and increased Career Technical Education (CTE) costs. However, due to increases in expenditures, such as Special Education contributions, increased pension contributions, and increases in step and column salaries, it is expected that the mandated expenditures will exceed the COLA and increases, resulting in a built-in deficit of \$80 per ADA. Without any new payments to reduce pension costs or

any one-time discretionary grants, the District will not benefit from the Governor's proposed 2020-21 budget.

Overall, his report included an overview of the following items addressed in the proposed budget: the California economy, Proposition 98, California's Proposition 98 versus the rest of the nation, cap on district reserves, statewide average reserves, maintaining reserves for cash flow, the 2020-21 LCFF and funding factors, per ADA growth in revenues and expenditures, Special Education, the California educator shortage, Community Schools, computer science, school nutrition, the Mandate Block Grant, and early care and education. He addressed items not included in the proposed budget such as: no increased LCFF targets, no payments to reduce CalSTRS and CalPERS costs, and no one-time discretionary grants.

**Board Comments:**

The Board thanked Dr. McEntire for providing a very comprehensive overview of the Governor's proposed budget.

d. Los Angeles County BEST Accounting System

Mr. Paul Landry from LACOE provided a presentation on the Business Enhancement System Transformation (BEST) Project, a new financial and human capital management system that the District is required to adopt and use. SMUSD is on Wave 3 of the rollout, with finance set to go live in July 2020 and purchasing shortly before July. Mr. Landry encouraged the District to utilize the Customer Resource Center and Computer Based Training (CBT) to get users in and trained. He also provided information about utilizing BEST with third party systems and the potential for a variety of interface options. He recommended Downey USD as a contact agency who is already successfully in production. He confirmed that the District will realize some cost savings by utilizing BEST and eliminating other systems.

**Board Comments:**

A Board member asked if the timeline was tailored to the District. Mr. Landry indicated that the District started with a kick-off meeting in March 2019 and that they wanted to be sure to allow enough time for the vendor clean up process which District staff has been working on for months. He recommends budgeting approximately 100 hours per person working on implementation, and noted that it takes a lot of work and there is a lot of data not in HRS.

A Board member asked if there is IT support investment. Mr. Landry indicated it depends on how information is consumed and if the District will be using third parties.

The Board thanked Mr. Landry for his presentation.

e. Professional Development Presentation

The Professional Development Presentation deferred to February 11, 2020.

Moved for approval by Mr. Barberie, seconded by Mr. Norgaard

Ayes: 4, Noes: 0  
Abstention: 0  
Preferential: 0

11. **COMMUNICATION SECTION**

a. Communications from the Board

Following is a list of events attended by the Board members:

**Lisa Link**

- 1/21 City Club Meeting
- 1/23 Chinese New Year Celebration at Carver
- 1/24 Chinese New Year Celebration at Valentine
- 1/24 Meet with Dr. Wilson

Various communications with community members regarding facilities bond and Wellness Center.

**Chris Norgaard**

- 1/16 Rotary Lunch: Dr. Wilson
- 1/17 SMHS Girls Basketball vs. Temple City
- 1/17 SMHS Boys Basketball vs. Temple City
- 1/21 City Club Meeting
- 1/22 SMHS PTSA Meeting
- 1/22 SMHS Girls Basketball vs. South Pasadena
- 1/22 SMHS Boys Basketball vs. South Pasadena
- 1/23 Carver Lunar New Year Celebration
- 1/23 Rotary Lunch
- 1/24 Valentine Lunar New Year Celebration
- 1/24 Memorial Service and Reception for Former Mayor Gene Dryden
- 1/24 Meeting with Dr. Wilson
- 1/28 HMS PTA Meeting

Mr. Norgaard made mention of the the upcoming Partnership for Awareness documentary screening of "The Upstanders" scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 7:00 pm, at the Carver Scrim Auditorium. There will be a panel discussion with District staff and community experts after the show.

**Corey Barberie**

- 1/21 City Club Meeting
- 1/23 Rec Department Survey Presentation
- 1/25 Library Open House
- 1/27 Rec Department Meeting

**Shelley Ryan**

- 1/15 Friends Board Meeting
- 1/21 City Club with Mitch Lehman Moments/Articles in San Marino News
- 1/24 Monrovia Chamber of Commerce
- 1/26 Huntington Hospital Volunteer
- 1/28 School Board Meeting

**C. Joseph Chang**

- 1/21 Meeting with Dr. Jeff Wilson
- 1/21 San Marino City Club Monthly Meeting
- 1/22 Valentine PTA Association Meeting
- 1/22 SMHS PTSA Association Meeting
- 1/23 Carver's Lunar New Year Celebration
- 1/23 San Marino School Foundation Executive Committee Meeting
- 1/24 Valentine's Lunar New Year Celebration
- 1/24 Memorial Service for Mr. Eugene Dryden, Former Mayor of San Marino City
- 1/26 Lunar New Year Gala for East Meet West Parent Education Club
- 1/27 Chinatown Service Center Board Meeting

b. Communications from the Student Board Member

Student Board Representative Grace Davis was excused - no report provided.

12. **BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Nothing discussion items presented.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no need to return to Closed Session, the meeting was adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Unadopted  
Dr. Jeff Wilson  
Superintendent  
Secretary to the Board