

School Board News! Highlights from the March 9, 2011 Board Meeting

by June Monach, Board of Education Trustee

Actions Taken:

- Board Votes 5-0 to Approve 3-Year Contract Agreement Between Teachers and School District
- Board Votes 5-0 to Approve Particular Kinds of Services (PKS) List for Employment Notification Process
- Board Votes 5-0 for Positive Certification of District's Ability to Meet Financial Obligations 2010/11 – 2012/13

3-Year Agreement with Teachers Receives Unanimous Approval from Board – The Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT) and the District, negotiated significant reductions to teacher salaries (via furlough days), health and dental benefit costs (via caps), and the co-curricular stipend schedule (by freezing stipend levels for teachers such as department chairs and elementary combination class teachers). The fiscal impact totals \$2.82 million between 2011/12 and 2013/14. In addition, the following provisions were negotiated:

- Additional reductions to teacher salaries (1.5% pay cut for all APT members in 2011-12) in the event the State imposes further reductions (of \$200 or more per student per year).
- Reductions to future post retirement benefits expenditures by the District based upon changes in the contract language.
- Details of a mutually acceptable Professional Common Planning Time model (currently early release time for students every Monday will be finalized by April 15, 2011).
- Continued development and implementation of a new evaluation instrument and process by the Employee Evaluation Committee.

For details, see pp. 1 – 25 at: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/030911packet.pdf>

Board Approved Nine Particular Kinds of Service (PKS) Areas for Employment Notification Process - Given the fiscal impact of the APT contract, the District administration proposed a PKS list, identifying services currently provided by elementary, middle, and high school level certificated employees that may be reduced in the 2011-12 school year. The PKS list below was approved by the Board, for a total of 4.4 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) employees. Temporary employees and those who may be re-assigned also will receive letters.

Elementary Services:

<u>Service</u>	<u>FTE*</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>FTE*</u>
Counseling	0.4	Reading Resource (EL)	0.4
Library Services	0.4	Science/Math Resource Specialist	0.6
Music	0.6	P.E. Specialist	0.4

Middle School Services:

<u>Service</u>	<u>FTE*</u>
Counseling	0.2

High School Services:

<u>Service</u>	<u>FTE*</u>
Math	0.6
English	0.8

*FTE = Full-time Equivalent where 1.0 FTE = Full-time Employee

Superintendent Constance Hubbard emphasized that “the reductions have not yet been made”, and that discussions will occur over the next couple of months with staff, departments, Parents’ Clubs, the Piedmont Educational Foundation, and Support Groups as to what reductions will actually be made and their impact on students and families. She provided examples of what impact the proposed level of reductions might have on the K-12 program. Some examples of what are being considered include: increased case loads for counseling staff; closing elementary libraries for a half day per week; changing how the instrumental music program is delivered at the elementary level; reducing the number of science

enrichment opportunities at the elementary level while maintaining secondary level opportunities in preparing for college and beyond; and increasing class sizes to targeted English and Math classes. Superintendent Hubbard explained that given our financial circumstances "some reductions will need to be made." PHS seniors Annie Hosler and Laura Watry spoke to the importance of the elementary instrumental music program as a foundation for student opportunities in the middle and high schools. Board President Roy Tolles apologized to those who would be receiving notices, acknowledging the impact this action has on the morale of all staff. He explained the Board's role in the process, noting that it is our responsibility to determine the scale of potential lay-offs that may need to be made, leaving the tough job of deciding what reductions to ultimately make to the administrative team. Difficult as it is, the Board reiterated that some program reductions will need to be made. For further details, see pp. 26 – 28 at:

<http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/030911packet.pdf>

Board Reviews and Adopts 2010-11 Second Interim Financial Report with Positive Certification - Issuing a positive certification on this financial report means that the Board is confident we will be able to meet our financial obligations for the remainder of the current fiscal year and subsequent two fiscal years. The Board thanked the District's Business Office staff including Assistant Superintendent Michael Brady and Director of Fiscal Services Michelle Nguyen for their unflinching commitment to the details of budget development and their ability to plan and develop multiple budget scenarios for a growing level of uncertainties given the State budget crisis.

Assistant Superintendent Brady reviewed with the Board anticipated activity in all funds, looking at the current fiscal year's activities and projections for 2011/12 and 2012/13. Because of the negotiated agreement with APT; anticipated agreements from negotiations with the other employee groups; an estimated \$400,000 in program reductions to be made beginning next year; the levying of parcel tax Measure E; and an anticipated 5% increase in the levy of the parcel tax Measure B; the originally estimated \$4 million cumulative budget gap has been closed.

Significant uncertainty remains with regard to whether the Governor's proposal to extend tax revenues for another three years will appear on the June ballot, and if it does, whether the measure will be approved by the electorate. An additional \$800,000 has been designated in the reserve to address this possibility. In addition, the District is prepared to address a possible increase in spending for room and board expenditures for residential placements of students with significant social/emotional mental health issues. These expenditures were previously paid for by the County and may be shifted to school districts. The District has estimated its financial exposure may rise to more than \$300,000 per year if this happens. Even if both the state tax extension proposal fails and we are forced to increase spending for mental health services previously paid for by the County, the District has sufficient reserves (\$3 million or 10% of total expenditures) to address both possibilities in 2011/12. By 2012/13, however, in order to balance the budget, we would need to identify an additional \$800,000 in program cuts or revenue increases. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the Second Interim Report and to support a positive certification, crediting the APT for its leadership role in negotiating an agreement with significant expenditure reductions, and the community through voter approved parcel tax funds, setting the District on a path of bringing spending in line with available resources.

pp. 30 – 40 at: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/030911packet.pdf>

Other Business: Representatives from the Lois Blair Rawlings Foundation announced the opening of the nomination process for the 2011 Lois Blair Rawlings Foundation Educational Inspiration Award. Nomination forms are available in school offices, on-line, and at the District Office. The Board held a public hearing on the designated uses for the Piedmont Educational Foundation Endowment Fund distribution.

What's Ahead:

- Negotiations will continue with the remaining employee groups, Classified School Employees Association (CSEA) and Association of Piedmont Administrators (APSA). Updates or outcomes will be reviewed by the Board in March and April, in time for the May 15 lay-off notification deadline for these employees.
- Over the next few months, Administrators will decide how to make \$300,000 - \$500,000 in program cuts beginning 2011/12, with an eye towards minimizing impacts on the current K-12 student experience.