

School Board News! Highlights from the October 13, 2010 Meeting

by June Monach, Board Member

2010-11 Plan of Action to Address District Goals: To learn and understand what plans of action PUSD administrators, teachers, and school support staff will implement to address this year's District goals and priorities, read pages 26-36 in the link below. Over the years, the Board and District administrators have found that the exercise of developing clear goals and an associated action plan has cultivated a culture of continuous improvement that is being embraced by more and more people.

<http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/101310packet.pdf>

Student Achievement: Speaking in class and in public is an important skill taught and practiced in our schools. We listened to students from PMS teacher John White's public speaking class present their ideas on strategies to address the school district's budget problem. The input was well articulated and insightful. Superintendent Constance Hubbard requested that students also provide their input to the Board in writing for use during the budget development process. Impressive!

PHS Graduate Study Survey Results: How well prepared do PHS graduates feel for college and beyond as a result of their education here in Piedmont? We listened to PHS Principal, Mr. Randall Booker, and parent volunteer, Mr. Adam Thacher, present results from a survey given to the Class of 2009. 24% of the class responded. Of the major academic subject areas, students felt most prepared in English, Mathematics, and Science. Out of a list of 20 skills, when asked, 'How important do you believe these skills are in general?' the following skills floated to the top of the list: critical thinking, problem solving, time management, oral, written and reading skills, test preparation, listening, working with others, and leadership. When asked 'How well do you believe your experience in PUSD helped you to master the following skills?' (same list of 20 skills), the following skills were identified by 83% - 94% of the respondents as extremely well mastered, well mastered, or mastered: working with others, listening, problem solving, critical thinking, internet research, and leadership. Mr. Booker noted that these important life skills are ones developed over the course of a Piedmont student's K-12 educational career. He also reported the high ratings students gave to support they had received in the areas of Academic Counseling, Wellness Center, College & Career Center, and Special Education services. The results will be shared with Departments/Chairs and the PHS Site Council. For details on the survey results go to:

http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/PHS_grad_survey.pdf

Negotiations to Begin: The employee contract between the Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT) and the school district will expire on June 30, 2011. The District and the APT have met to discuss which parts of the contract (contract openers) to address during the negotiations process for the 2011-2013 contract. By law, the contract openers must be available for public information and comment ("sunshined") for two weeks. They were introduced at our first public hearing on September 29, 2010. We conducted a second hearing and approved the openers this evening. Formal negotiations will now proceed, and are confidential from this point forward. Superintendent Hubbard explained that since nearly 90% of the budget is attributable to salaries and benefits, these two areas of the contract are being opened. She was pleased to report that an Evaluation Committee with representatives from the K-12 faculty and administration will convene to craft a cutting edge evaluation model that supports professional growth and student learning. During the public hearing, resident George Childs, urged everyone to exercise great restraint so as not to risk "the curtailment of the depth and breadth of program available to students." In response to past statements made by APT President Harlan Mohagen, Board members expressed their appreciation to the APT for their willingness to continue working collaboratively towards a sustainable solution. Board members also thanked those who have provided input, noting that their perspectives and interests will be taken into careful consideration during the negotiations process. The approved openers can be found on pp 7 - 9 of the following link:

<http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/101310packet.pdf>

Community Builders: Mr. Mark Becker and Mr. Andy Ball were eloquently recognized by Board President Roy Tolles, Mayor Dean Barbieri, and past Board President Grier Graff, for their amazing efforts in the rebuilding of Frank C. Havens School. The new names of the play field and multipurpose room will be the 'Becker Play Field' and the 'Andy Ball Multipurpose Room.'

In Other Business: The Board approved a lease-lease back contract for the Wildwood retrofit project at a guaranteed maximum price (GMP) of \$4,715,000 with Overaa Construction Company; Notices of Completion were approved for Ellen Driscoll Playhouse and the PHS Quad/Library Building and PHS Student Center seismic safety projects; the Notice of Completion for Havens was tabled until the next meeting; the Board approved a \$60,000 contract between the District and Burke Construction Services for program management services from 10/1/10 to 9/30/11; and the Board adopted a resolution authorizing the filing of an application to the California Department of Education for a Qualified School Construction Bond Allocation.