

School Board News | Highlights from the January 11, 2012 School Board Meeting

by June Monach, Board Member

Spotlight on Student Learning PMS teacher, Mr. John White, introduced the Board to three middle school students, Nina Adarkar, Tom Jara, and Sarah Stuetz. The students shared with us the "Spoken Word," a form of poetry where students combine public speaking, dramatic performance, and literary expression. The Board's reaction to the thoughts and emotions conveyed was in a word, "Wow!" Check out the KCOM video of each student's amazing "Spoken Word." Listen to the students, by going to the KCOM video archive:

Go to School Board, Jan 11, 2012 Meeting, Agenda Item VI. A. - <http://www.ci.piedmont.ca.us/video/index.shtml>

2010-11 Financial Audit Report & GO Obligations Bond Audit Report The Board accepted reports from the District's independent auditor, Vavrinek, Trine & Day. PUSD passed with flying colors, receiving a "clean or unqualified" audit in which VTD Managing Partner, Ms. Terri Montgomery reported that financial information of the District's educational program and construction program was presented "fairly." For the detailed reports, go to:

http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/063011_Audit%20Report_011112.pdf

http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/063011_Measure_E_Letter.pdf

http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/063011_Bond_Audit_011112.pdf

http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/063011_Bond_Performance_Audit_011112.pdf

Budget Development for 2012-13 & Beyond The Board received an update from Superintendent Constance Hubbard on the recently released Governor's January Budget Proposal. She reported that more details would be forthcoming after January 17th when the projected impact of the Governor's proposal would be reviewed with school districts by School Services of California. At this time, in 2012-13, depending upon the outcome of the November 2012 election, a decision on the local parcel tax levy amount, and how private fundraising dollars are allocated, PUSD faces a estimated shortfall of \$433/student to \$800/student. The primary driver of this estimate is whether the Governor's state tax extension initiative will be approved by voters in November. Superintendent Hubbard asked that the Board provide direction with regard to budget priorities in developing the 2012-13 and multi-year budgets given the various financial uncertainties. She recommended that programs/services be maintained at 2011-12 levels and there be no planned lay-offs for next year. Superintendent Hubbard also recommended that three furlough days be reinstated, which would benefit 2,500 students and over 300 employees. The following questions were asked for Board Members to address in the priority-setting discussion:

1. Should any programs or services recently cut be reinstated with new funds?
2. Should any student and/or professional development furlough days be reinstated with new funds?
3. What reserve level is the Board most comfortable with given state funding volatility and uncertainties?

Board President Roy Tolles led the Board discussion in its assessment of the risks currently faced by the Board. There was overwhelming agreement on the Board to respect the interests of the Parents' Clubs to fund the reinstatement of a student and professional development furlough day, since student instruction time and professional training both impact the quality of the education students will receive next year. In an effort to weigh the anticipated risks, the Board also asked staff to develop scenarios for review at a future meeting, making different assumptions about parcel tax levels by year over the next three years. APCP President Mary Ireland clarified for the Board that \$250,000 in Parent Club funds had been earmarked by all groups for use this year to address potential mid-year cuts and other program preservation needs. Since the magnitude of the mid-year cuts for this year was significantly less (approximately \$40,000), she suggested that the Parent Club funds be applied to address current mid-year cuts and reinstatement of at least two furlough days (\$180,000) next year. Because of the uncertainties in state revenue projections, the Board supported the reinstatement of two days, given the availability of one-time Parent Club funds. The Board was not comfortable providing direction at this time to reinstate a third furlough day.

Because the multi-year projections show continued deficit spending in 2012-13 and 2013-14, the Board agreed it would not be prudent to use one-time funds to reinstate ongoing program/service reductions that had been made. In addition higher reserve levels would need to continue to be maintained to address current and future budget

uncertainties. Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT) President, Harlan Mohagen, extended her appreciation to the Board for expressing its understanding of the sacrifices made by staff, and making the reinstatement of furlough days a high priority for the development of next year's budget. See pp 1-12 for additional background:
http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/011112packet.pdf

2012-13 Instructional Calendar Adopted – The school calendar is a negotiated item between the school district and the Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT). At the December meeting, the Board tabled the decision to ratify the calendar given the placement of certain furlough days and uncertainties around whether funds were available to reinstate them. Based on the budget discussions this evening and interest on the part of Parent Clubs to use available funds to reinstate furlough days, the Board voted 4-0 to approve adoption of the 2012-13 instructional calendar (Board Member Martha Jones was out of the country and not at the meeting). Superintendent Hubbard recommended that two days be reinstated: 1) August 20, 2012 - professional development furlough day, and 2) March 20, 2013 - student furlough day. She suggested that a decision would need to be made by April if \$60,000 in new monies were available to reinstate an additional student furlough day on October 8th. Superintendent Hubbard also noted that elementary principals will be discussing the scheduling of parent-teacher conference days so they would not be in November. The conference schedule is not part of the negotiated instructional calendar and has yet to be determined. The first day of school for students will be on Wednesday, August 22, 2012. The last day of school for students will be on Thursday, June 13, 2013.

Adopted calendar: http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/forms/12_13_instructional_calendar.pdf
Frequently Asked Questions about the calendar:
http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/forms/instructional_calendar_faq.pdf

Negotiations Between the District & APT – The District and Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT) have a contract agreement that is effective through June 30, 2014. Every year, two articles of the contract, 'Benefits' and 'Salary' are re-opened for negotiation. In addition, up to two articles of choice by APT and up to two articles of choice by the District may be re-opened for negotiation. In Piedmont, the instructional calendar for the next school year is negotiated separately and in advance of the rest of the contract in order to help families and staff plan ahead for the subsequent school year. *Before negotiations begin*, the public has an opportunity to provide input on the 'Salary' and 'Benefits' articles as well as suggesting other articles for consideration to be included in the upcoming negotiations process. The Board held the first public hearing of proposed re-openers. The second public hearing will be held on January 24th, after which it is anticipated that the Board will approve the re-openers and the confidential negotiations process will begin. Superintendent Hubbard noted that the District and APT jointly recommend that in addition to the 'Benefits' and 'Salary' articles, the additional two articles to be re-opened be: 1) Article VI. Hours and Professional Responsibility; and 2) Article XIX. Employee Evaluation, in order to continue the important work of the Evaluation Committee and the review of the school site bell schedules. During public comment, the Board heard from a community member who supported the proposed openers and suggested that contingency language be considered in the event circumstances worsen. The Board confirmed it will consider this suggestion as part of negotiations when opening discussions around salary. Go to pp 15-16 at:
http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/011112packet.pdf

Fee Proposals Between PUSD & murakami/Nelson Approved – The Board approved two fee proposals for work at Beach Elementary School: 1) \$51,600 for seismic strengthening and site work; and 2) \$10,550 for seismic strengthening and modernization of the Beach auditorium. For details, go to pp 17-22 at:
http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/2011_12/011112packet.pdf