

PIEDMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Council Chambers, City Hall

120 Vista Avenue

Piedmont, California 94611

MINUTES OF

Regular Meeting of the Governing Board

October 10, 2012

CALL TO ORDER	Board President Richard Raushenbush called the meeting of the Board of Education to order at 6:30 p.m.
ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM	President Richard Raushenbush; Vice President Andrea Swenson and Board Members Ray Gadbois, Sara Pearson and Roy Tolles were present.
Adjourn to Closed Session	The Board adjourned to Closed Session at 6:31 p.m. to discuss: Public Employee Performance Evaluation: Superintendent (Government Code Section 54957)
Others Present in Closed Session	None
Reconvene to Regular Session	President Raushenbush called the Regular Session of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Others Present at Regular Session	Superintendent Constance Hubbard Randall Booker, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Report of Action Taken in Closed Session	President Raushenbush reported that no action was taken in closed session.
Agenda Adjustments	None
COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT)	APT President Harlan Mohagen reported positive feedback on the professional development day held October 8. That day she participated in a WASC meeting with Millennium staff. Susan Simonds, art teacher at PHS and Millennium, described a glass-blowing fieldtrip at CCA organized by Gillian Bailey. Ms. Simonds is working with her students on a ceramics project entitled "One Million Bones," a nationwide art project to acknowledge those dying and suffering from genocide. Students research a particular moment in time and write an essay based on their research. Each student creates two bones to represent their story; these bones will be displayed at the National Mall. MHS student Troy Smith did a project about genocide in Africa. Ms. Simonds would like to send several students to Washington, D.C. to participate in placing the bones.
CSEA	None
Parent Clubs	None
Student Representative to Board	Elise Lasky read a thank you note from Mrs. Hebert that expressed her gratitude for the work of Piedmont students at the Harvest Festival. They did not have enough adults and could not have done it without the help of the students. Over 50 high school and 25 middle school student volunteers worked all day even

though they had signed up for a few hours.

Today there are Cross Country and Women's Tennis meets, tomorrow there are a Tennis meet and Women's Volleyball, Friday is Homecoming and the JV game is at 4:00 p.m. and the Varsity game at 7:00 p.m.

For Homecoming ASB is hosting a rally Friday and a dance on Saturday night; the theme is the Wild West.

Persons Wishing to Speak to Any Item Not Listed on the Agenda None

Superintendent Announcements API scores will be published in the next few days. When reviewing them it is best to compare Piedmont with other unified school districts. There are districts that consist of only K-8 or high schools while unified districts include all grades. Right now API scores cannot be announced but a preliminary look shows Piedmont in the top five unified school districts in California once again.

Board President Announcements: None

REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS

School Support Tax Election Timeline Superintendent Hubbard explained that the goal is to have the School Support Tax on the March 2013 ballot. We want to make sure people are aware of the proposal and give community members as many opportunities as possible for input. There will be opportunities for the public to comment tonight and at the next two Board meetings on Oct. 24th and Nov. 14th. We have already received three or four emails and will be cataloging issues, suggestions and questions we receive. Other opportunities for input include the Budget Advisory Committee, parent groups, the Piedmont Educational Foundation, and the Citizens' Advisory Committee to the Parcel Tax (CAC).

This School Support Tax is different than Parcel Taxes in the past, whose purpose was to mitigate Prop. 13 losses. This support tax represents a fundamental core of our operating budget. School funding comes from the state through property taxes, which are collected at the County level and sent to the State, which sends money back to fund the district schools. In some school districts the local portion is bigger than what the State provides; these are called Basic Aid Districts. In Piedmont some people think we get excess taxes going back to the schools but that is not the reality.

In Piedmont, the community has voluntarily given extra money, which represents 30% of our operating budget. In 2000 it was 16% of the budget but since then it has gone to backfill the reductions in State funding. In the past we could look at what extras the tax could support, such as class size reductions, technology infrastructure. Now this money is needed to maintain programs at their current level. We are no longer able to ask what extra things the community wants, e.g., world language at the elementary level. We have been working with the budget to protect as much programs for as many students as we can for as long as possible.

This is my fourth campaign and the most urgent one. In the past the time frame was a parcel tax with a duration of four years and an escalator allowing the tax to increase up to 5% each year. We are looking at recommendations for duration, escalator and possible exemptions and will develop a proposal for the Board to

consider on Nov. 14th and will come back on Nov. 28th for Board approval. We will bring it to vote by the community in March. Keep in mind that current Measure B expires in June 2014.

President Raushenbush explained that PUSD is not a Basic Aid district because so many homes are under Prop. 13 restrictions. California is 47th in the nation in school spending, and PUSD receives an even smaller amount from the state. Contributions and parcel taxes bring us up to the national average in per pupil spending but we provide a far above average education. We have been trying to backfill cuts from the State and are now just barely holding on. It has only been the sacrifices on the part of everyone that have allowed us to continue.

Superintendent Hubbard introduced Doug Ireland and Katie Korotzer, co-chairs of the School Support Tax committee. Mr. Ireland explained that we are not just a top school district in California, but in the nation. The parcel tax program has gone on for 27 years to allow Piedmont to provide a top-notch education. Four years ago it was very different: there was low morale, the economy was in turmoil, the seismic program was at its beginning. Today all school sites have been upgraded, and we continue to provide a quality education. The committee will work through the questions - the amount to raise, escalators, and exemptions - and will come back with a formal recommendation. Ms. Korotzer explained that the campaign plan is to call and email residents. They have staffed key positions and will roll out a campaign on November 29th at a campaign event. They will get out to community meetings and events to publicize the campaign. Superintendent Hubbard reiterated that the School Support Tax will be the first topic on the agenda of the next two Board meetings and will be a time to present your opinion to the Board.

Resident George Childs stated that he is concerned about the level of the tax and its implications for those retired and on fixed incomes, as well as those with lower levels of income. He urged the Board to support full or partial exemptions based on income. As a way of determining how someone might qualify for an exemption, he suggested looking at the PUC Lifeline program offered by the telephone company as a model for exemption. He would like the CAC to continue as a valuable resource for informing the Board. Overall he would recommend that the renewal be for a four-year term and be held to the amount of the prior year with no escalator.

Resident Hope Salzar, who is relatively new to Piedmont, thinks the tax should continue and suggests an increase if Props. 30 and 38 do not pass. She appreciates the quality of education but notes that at Beach, a school with 366 students, the library is only open three days per week.

President Raushenbush said that at the next meeting, the Board will work to establish the direction they will pursue, and at the November 14th meeting a draft will be presented. He urged people to present their opinions by email or in person prior to the meeting on November 28th, when the resolution on the school support tax will be adopted.

Board Member Tolles said he is frustrated by the lack of State spending; the passage of Prop. 30 or 38 will still keep us at 47th in

the nation. If Props 30 and 38 do not pass, he would like to look at a bigger level or emergency tax. He would like to see a term of more than 4 years, either 6 years or permanent. If permanent, he would like it to stay at baseline and offer exemptions only if there is an escalator. With an escalator, he would like to see an average of 3%. He notes we are down 20% from what we got from the state four years ago and Measure E helped fill that gap.

Board Member Gadbois notes that the parcel tax is a critical source of funding we will need for years to come. We hold the election a year before the tax expires so we have time to plan if the tax does not pass and cuts need to be made. He would like to see a contingency plan if Props. 30 and 38 do not pass. If all goes well, we could ask for a flat renewal and have a different form of elevator tied to the growth rate and assessed property values to keep up with inflation. It is the quality of our schools that is the foundation of our property values. He would like to ensure the stability of the funding over the years, perhaps with a longer term. It is a question of how to balance the needs of parents, students, community members and seniors; there are legal limitations that allow mostly for age-based exemptions. I received an email proposing that the bigger the parcel, the bigger the tax. We have to be careful with such a proposal that the tax does not become an *ad valorem* tax based on property size.

Board Member Pearson asked people to share their thoughts on the tax sooner rather than later; they can call or email. We need the support tax as a stable source of funding and would like to see if voters would approve an evergreen tax.

Vice President Swenson appreciates that the community supports education and that the District is able to do so much with so little. Because we are doing things a bit differently with this election, it is more important than ever to hear from the public. I would like to see a flat tax with a time frame extended to 6-10 years. I believe an income exemption is possible and has been done elsewhere.

President Raushenbush said now he knows more about school funding and knows our schools would not be the same without the parcel tax. He likes that the Board has to vote on the tax every once in awhile but would like to see a longer term or permanent tax because he cannot imagine a time the tax would not be needed. He favors an escalator because it is difficult to anticipate future funding. We lost \$7m from the state and raised \$1.2m through parcel taxes and \$3.8m through employee concessions and furloughs. The District also received over \$1m in Federal stimulus funds and Measure E. A senior exemption would not be feasible because it would exempt about half the population and others would see their tax doubled, but he would like to look into an income-based tax exemption. Even if we got all the money we are entitled to under Prop. 98, this would not get us to the national average. If neither proposition passes and we get another cut, he would ask the community for a supplemental tax before we cut people and programs further.

Board Member Gadbois noted that the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), which is a broadly representative group including many stakeholders, is another opportunity for people to participate and give their opinions.

Superintendent Hubbard explained that the BAC meeting was scheduled for Oct. 25th but will be rescheduled for a date before the next School Board meeting. She will speak on the tax at the next Piedmont Educational Foundation meeting. At the next meeting they will bring back an outline of what people are thinking. On November 14th the Board will discuss a draft measure. The school budget is predicated on Prop. 30 passing because the State budget is predicated on that. Between November 14th and November 28th there will not be substantive changes because all the legal work needs to be done to bring back a resolution by November 28th. The issues include renewal, amount, duration, escalator and exemption.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES REPORT: SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT LEARNING

The East Bay Monthly's 12th Annual Cover Art Contest

Assistant Superintendent Booker recognized the work of art students from Gillian Bailey's AP 2-D art class. Once again her students submitted their work for the Annual Cover Contest sponsored by *The East Bay Monthly*. The *East Bay Monthly's* 12th Annual Cover Contest celebrates the work of young artists in grades 6 through 12—and their teachers—in public and private schools throughout the East Bay. Seven PHS students were winners with a sweep for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place and four honorable mentions. The students display a diversity of subject and media and demonstrate the value of differentiated instruction: their class included various grade and experience levels. The work will be on display at the Student Center.

PHS junior Robert Yu won first place for his piece entitled "Stroll in the Park." PHS junior Leslie Zhang won second place for her piece entitled "Not Feel Lonely." PHS senior Xinyue Wang earned third place for her piece entitled "Early Morning Chinatown."

PHS junior Emma Altieri earned Honorable Mention for her piece entitled "Etching of a Peacock Feather." PHS sophomore Rachel Frankel earned Honorable Mention for her piece entitled "Lower East Side." PHS junior Anna Sanford earned Honorable Mention for her piece entitled "Ballet Shoes." PHS junior Maya Thomas earned Honorable Mention for her piece entitled "Astrid."

Congratulations to PHS Art Teacher, Ms. Gillian Bailey, and all of our art students. While we often hear about the accomplishments of our athletes, it is not as often that we are able to recognize the work of our art students, who work every bit as hard as our athletes and seldom get the recognition they deserve. We have won now for four years in a row.

INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcement of Special Board Meeting to be held November 28, 2012

Superintendent Hubbard announced that a Special Board Meeting has been called for Wednesday, November 28, 2012 for the Board to approve a resolution for the renewal of the School Support Tax for the March, 2013 election. The meeting will be held at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 Vista Avenue, Piedmont at 7:00 p.m.

Superintendent Hubbard announced that she, as well as Mr. Ireland and Ms. Korotzer, are available to come speak to any groups about the School Support Tax. If citizens want to organize

a gathering, they would be happy to come and speak. They want to share this information so that people can know and understand how the budget and the tax work. For the last ten years, over 30 people have regularly attended the Budget Advisory Committee and are very aware of the budget issues.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Swenson received the following emails:

- several emails concerning the School Support Tax
- an email from a parent concerned about homework policy during the Jewish High Holidays; she referred the issue to the Superintendent, who spoke with the parent
- email from Giving Campaign chairs on talking points and FAQ on our schools

Mr. Gadbois had a conversation with a parent regarding having a trainer at away games. He encouraged them to work with Principal Kitchens and the High School staff.

BOARD REPORTS

Vice President Swenson announced that the League of Women Voters will hold an election forum tomorrow night on the pros and cons of local initiatives, including Measure Y. The forum will be held at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers.

Board Member Pearson attended the Diversity Education & Advisory Committee meeting, a committee including a cross-section of teachers and principals established to support campuses and staff with diversity issues that arise. They watched a video and explored ways schools might expand discussion of the experiences of others. She also attended the PHS Parent Council, the Tri-School Site Council and the MPS Site Council. The student assembly on prevention of student date rape presented to 9th graders was a good example of creative and effective communication coming out of student experience. Tomorrow is the last day to sign up for the PHS Boosters Golf and Tennis Workshop on October 15th.

Board Member Gadbois ran in the Fall Fest 5 K with his dog. He attended the Beach Parent Club Meeting where Mr. Booker presented the budget and the School Support Tax, as well as the Tri-School Site Council, the School Support Tax planning group and the Date Rape Prevention Assembly at PHS.

Board Member Tolles attended the Piedmont Appreciating Diversity Committee and enjoyed the open-ended discussion about members' reasons for participating. He attended a film about a student in Texas who tried to get sex education in schools where only abstinence was taught. This was a stark contrast to the Date Rape Prevention Assembly in which a play was performed by PHS drama students based on the experiences of some former PHS students.

President Raushenbush attended a party for new parents and the School Support Tax planning group. He stopped by PMS to watch the Medieval Banquet put on by 7th graders.

Ms. Pearson recommended that people see the movie *The Waiting Room*, which was filmed at the Highland Hospital Emergency Room by a Beach dad named Peter Nicks.

Superintendent Hubbard announced that Madeline Levine, author of the best-selling book, *The Price of Privilege* and the recently

released *Teach Your Children Well*, will address the topic of raising your children for success. This forum will be held on October 25th at 7:00 p.m. and you can get a reserved seat through the Adult School. This topic is useful for parents of younger students as well as high school students. Dr. Levine will have a session with our teachers an hour before the talk. You can find more information about the topic at her Challenge Success website.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Board Member Tolles moved to accept the items on the consent calendar, Board Member Pearson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- A. Adopt Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2012 Board Meeting
- B. Approve Williams Report for the period of July – September, 2012
- C. Approve Personnel Action Report
- D. Approve Monthly Financial Report of District for Month of September 2012
- E. Accept Donation
- F. Approve field trip on October 19-20, 2012, for 14 students on the Varsity Boy's and Varsity Girl's cross country teams to compete in a meet in Walnut, California
- G. Approve field trip for 12 students on the Women's Basketball Team to attend a tournament in Willits, California from Nov. 29 - Dec. 1, 2012
- H. Approve field trip for 12 students on the Women's Basketball Team to attend a tournament in Phoenix, Arizona from Dec. 19 - 22, 2012
- I. Approve reimbursement to parents of one student for nonpublic tuition costs, effective July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011, July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012, and July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013 at a total cost not to exceed \$90,260. Funding: Special Education

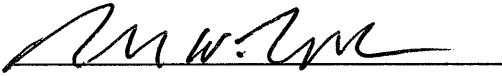
FUTURE BOARD AGENDA ITEMS

- SUBJECT TO CHANGE ←
- 2012-13 Action Plan (Oct. 24)
 - Final Beach GMP (TBD)
 - School Support Tax – Discussion and Public Input (Oct. 24 & Nov. 14)
 - School Support Tax – Recommendations and Report (Nov. 28)
 - Accept Closeout of Seismic Safety Program Projects: Maintenance Building, Havens School, PHS Quad/Library and Student Center Buildings, Wildwood and Beach Schools (Oct.-Dec.)
 - Approve Collective Bargaining Agreement with CSEA (TBD)
 - Facilities Use (TBD)
 - Special Education (TBD)

- Bond Program/state Modernization Funding Priorities (Jan.)

There being no further business, and with no objection by the Board, President Raushenbush adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Adjournment



RICHARD RAUSHENBUSH, Board President
Piedmont Unified School District
Board of Education



CONSTANCE HUBBARD
Secretary, Piedmont Unified School District
Board of Education