

School Board News | Highlights from the December 14, 2011 School Board Meeting

by June Monach, Board Member

Spotlight on Student Learning: 11 PHS Teachers Pursue National Board Certification - Supporting professional growth that improves instruction and student learning is a priority in our school district. Assistant Superintendent Randall Booker shined the spotlight on a group of PHS teachers who are currently participating in the National Board Certification process, a rigorous and collaborative process of reflecting on one's classroom instructional practices within the context of national teaching standards. The faculty participants include:

<u>English</u>	<u>Social Studies</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Art</u>
Beth Black	Ally Cota	Bill Marthinsen	Gillian Bailey
Mercedes Foster	Courtney Goen		
Elise Marks	Dave Keller	<u>Science</u>	<u>Library</u>
Jody Weverka		Marna Chamberlain	Susan Stutzman

Assistant Superintendent Booker thanked the PHS Parents' Club for their generosity in supporting the professional growth of the high school teachers. The Board lauded PHS English teacher Ms. Rosie Reid who received her National Board Certification in 2006 and the eleven high school faculty members who have begun the 10-part performance assessment process that includes video portfolios, analysis of student work, evidence of leadership and collaboration in the school, and intensive reflection on one's own teaching practice.

Review & Approval of the District's First Interim Financial Report – Between 2008-09 and 2012-13, the District will have lost in excess of \$6.4 million in state funds, a 20 percent cut in per pupil funding over the past three years. Based on a detailed review of the multi-year budget situation presented by Assistant Superintendent Michael Brady, the Board certified the financial condition of our school district with a positive certification. This means that we are confident the District will be able to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of this fiscal year and the subsequent two years. As a result of foresight, a dedicated staff, and incredibly supportive community, we have weathered the recent storm remarkably well. The positive certification, however, has not come without sacrifice. Employee concessions through temporary salary reductions from furlough days and hard caps on medical benefits, has contributed over \$3.87 million in savings to the District over the next three years (addressed primarily through \$2.4 million in health benefit caps and \$1.35 million from furlough days). Parents' Club funding to the District has increased by \$100 per student, generating a need to sustain an annual fundraising goal of \$1.55 million in parent donations. And community support through the school parcel tax is an essential and ongoing part of the 3-legged stool that supports our K-12 educational priorities. The multi-year projections show an approximate \$1.2 million shortfall by 2013-14 with spending exceeding revenues in 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 in the amounts of \$763,000, \$1.57 million, and \$1.7 million respectively. The District has built its reserve level in 2011-12 to 9.8% of its operating budget to address limited growth in expenditures relative to an overall decline in projected revenues. By the Second Interim Report, Assistant Superintendent Brady noted that a plan must be developed to address the \$1.2 million shortfall estimated in 2013-14. He also explained that all estimates and assumptions will be revised based on information as it becomes available. For example, as recently as this afternoon, the shortfall estimates were revised downward given fewer K-12 cuts than anticipated to Piedmont's budget. According to Assistant Superintendent Brady, based on this information, the estimated shortfall of \$1.2 million may potentially be reduced by half.

Negotiations Timeline & Process Announced 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 timeline for public input is as follows:

Nov 9, 2011	Regular Board Meeting	Article XVI (Benefits) & Article XVII (Salaries), and other recommended articles
Dec 14, 2011	Regular Board Meeting	Article XVI (Benefits) & Article XVII (Salaries), and other recommended articles
Jan 11, 2012	Regular Board Meeting	1 st Public Hearing of proposed re-openers by the District and APT

The best time to provide input on which two additional articles should be re-opened, is between now and January 5th. Specific input about the 'Benefits' and 'Salary' articles will be accepted through January 24th. After January 24th, the District and APT begin the negotiations process which is confidential.

Assistant Superintendent Booker noted that "staff recommends that in addition to the 'Benefits' and 'Salary' articles, the additional two articles to re-open be: 1) Article VI. Hours and Professional Responsibility; and 2) Article XIX. Employee Evaluation, in order to continue the work of the Evaluation Committee in progress and the review of the school site bell schedules." Go to pp 16-17 at: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/121411packet.pdf>

Adoption of the 2012-13 Instructional Calendar Postponed – The school calendar is a negotiated item between the school district and the Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT). As noted above, Piedmont has enjoyed a tradition of negotiating the calendar separately from the rest of the contract to facilitate the needs of families who want to learn as far enough in advance as possible when school will start and end, and what the holiday vacation schedule will be. The calendar is determined taking into consideration its impact on student learning, the need to account for state mandates, conference and collaboration time, the importance of optimizing classroom learning and maximizing daily attendance/minimizing absences. This year, according to Assistant Superintendent Booker, "The proposed calendar includes the identification of student and staff furlough days that, if budget circumstances allowed, could be reinstated." Any reinstatement of days will need to be approved by the Board before June 2012 and will not involve changes in the start or end date of the school year for students. Feedback from the parent survey administered by the Association of Parent Clubs of Piedmont in February this year also was used by the negotiations team. Although it was anticipated that the Board would review and approve the calendar, its adoption was tabled for a future meeting. The Board asked staff to work with the negotiations team to consider the concerns expressed by a majority of the Board over how the furlough days are structured in the calendar. Although the Board recognized that Parents' Clubs are prepared to redeem some of the furlough days, Board Members thought that the adopted calendar should not assume the buy-back of any days – and instead schedule furlough days so as to support and offer minimal disruption to the K-12 instructional program. Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT) President Harlan Mohagen noted that any changes would need to be brought back to the membership for approval.

Go to pp 9-10 for details: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/121411packet.pdf>

Seismic Safety Construction Program Budget Report – Assistant Superintendent Brady confirmed the good news reported at the last Board Meeting that because of the recent \$1.8 billion bond issuance by the state treasurer's office, PUSD will receive funds for construction projects that have been state approved but not yet funded. The State Allocation Board met today and approved the release of \$8.45 million in state funding for the PHS, PMS, and Wildwood projects. The District expects to receive the funds by mid-January of 2012. According to Assistant Superintendent Brady, with these funds both phases of the Beach project can be completed in time for the start of school next year, which will bring Piedmont's Seismic Safety Construction Program to completion. Program Manager David Burke presented a summary of the project and program budgets. The total program budget remains unchanged at \$69.1 million. With the additional state funding, PUSD has secured \$70.5 in local and state funds, currently \$1.4 million more than the total budget. Program Manager David Burke also conveyed good news about the anticipated funding for the Beach project. According to the District's state funding consultants, the application for \$2.8 million in state funding for the Beach project has been approved by the Office of Public School Construction. Given the timeliness of this approval, it is very likely that our last project will be funded with Prop 1D funds approved by voters in November 2006. The following projects have been completed on time and within budget: Havens, Ellen Driscoll, PHS, PMS, Wildwood, and the Maintenance Facility. The Board commended the District's administration and project management team for their excellent work in securing the necessary funds to complete the PUSD Seismic Safety Program on time and within the \$69.1 million budget.

Go to pp 11-12 at: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/121411packet.pdf>

Beach Capital Campaign – The Board approved a proposed set of revisions for approved enhancements to the Beach project. The principal additions concern site work and garden enhancements. The Beach community is seeking to develop opportunities to incorporate environmental education into the Beach site with exciting garden and sustainability features such as a rain garden and permeable paving. And enhancements to the auditorium will support school and community gatherings, including the popular "Beach Revue" musical performance. The Board approved capital campaign list will be used to raise funds to enhance the renovation work at Beach Elementary School, similar to the fundraising campaigns that were conducted

at Havens, Wildwood, and PHS when each site was under construction. Parent volunteers Patricia Andrews and John Gibbs thanked the administration and the Board for seeing the Beach project through construction and supporting the enhancements that have been integrated into the design plans for the school renovations. The Board thanked the Beach parent community for its enthusiasm and efforts.

Go to pp 13-15 for more information: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/121411packet.pdf>

To see the Garden Plan go to: http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/Beach_Garden_Plan_121411.pdf

Enrollment Capacity – Assistant Superintendent Booker reviewed with the Board the ramifications of changing its inter-district transfer policy on the District's current enrollment capacity. The "Guidelines for Enrollment Capacity" adopted by the Board on April 27, 2011 were based on the belief that lower class sizes are desirable for providing a high quality educational program and that the capacity standards approved were essential to providing the current program. Assistant Superintendent Booker explained that any change in the current policy would require that the Board approve changes in our current capacity definitions and consider the adverse financial impacts any change may have on program and service delivery in our schools. He also clarified with the Board and the public that the District currently is at capacity district-wide. Assistant Superintendent Booker reviewed with the Board distinctions between physical/open seat capacity and staffing/district ratio capacity. At a future Board meeting, staff will bring back a draft timeline for Board direction on what next steps to pursue.

See pp 18-20 for further details: <http://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/aboutpusd/agenda.minutes/121411packet.pdf>

February 29, 2012 Special Board Meeting – A special meeting has been scheduled from 4 to 5 pm in the District Administration Office Conference Room for the swearing-in of new Board Members and the re-organization of the new Board.