



Phoenix Elementary School District No. 1

Special Session Board Meeting
September 17, 2009

Dr. Ruth Ann Marston presided over the PESD #1 Governing Board Meeting in the Phoenix Elementary School District #1 Governing Board Room

Other Board members present at the meeting were:

Mr. Doug Allsworth
(Arrived at 8:45 a.m.)

Ms. Susan Bliss

Ms. Liz Meza
(absent)

Dr. Louisa Stark

Also present were:

Ms. Myriam Roa
Superintendent

Mr. Tom Lind
Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Kenneth Baca
Assistant Superintendent for
Business Services

Mr. Randy Dickason
Executive Director for
Human Resources

Ms. Debra S. Gomez
Interim Executive Director of
University Public Schools, Inc.
(UPSI)

Ms. Joanne Phillips
Arizona Education Cadre

Ms. Eleanor Moyza
Board Secretary

A. Study Session – 8:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order – Dr. Ruth Ann Marston
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Tom Lind

(Section C was discussed out of the order of discussion)

C. Study Session Update

3. Receive and Discuss UPSP Update – Myriam Roa / Superintendent

Ms. Roa reported that the students who were previously enrolled in Phoenix Elementary School District are now enrolled in University Public School Phoenix (UPSP) and that one of the intentions of our project was to make sure that our students had as much access as they wanted to UPSP. Ms. Roa stated that a total of 446 students at University Public School Phoenix are former Phoenix Elementary students. The total number of students at UPSP is 662 students, about 40% of the students coming from outside of the district, students that are brand new to our district and 60% of the students are from Phoenix Elementary Schools. Many Whittier, Shaw and Emerson 7th and 8th graders chose to enroll both at University Public Schools and many of our other schools. We had several Whittier, Shaw and Emerson students going to Kenilworth and several going to all of our other 7th and 8th grade schools.

Ms. Susan Bliss asked:

- How many 6th graders did we have last year?
- How many 7th graders do we have this year?
- How many 7th graders are at UPSP?
- How many 7th graders are unaccounted for?

Ms. Roa stated that we have 121 students who are enrolled in University Public Schools Phoenix who were at the Prep last year and last year, there were 217 seventh graders that would have been 8th graders at University Public Schools if every single one of them had stayed enrolled. Twenty-eight of them enrolled in other schools in our District and that indicates there are 64 students that are unaccounted for, which we assume moved out of the District. Dr. Marston asked if we can check to make sure that they moved out of the District and not dropped out of school and Ms. Roa stated that this will be looked into.

Dr. Stark stated that her organization, which has housing in areas that traditionally contributed to the Prep Academy, Edison and Garfield primarily have lost between 60-65 kids from families that have moved out. She stated that it's partly because of economic reasons and partly because of hostility towards Latinos. These were kids who were enrolled in our schools in our school district and have left. Dr. Marston stated that we know that it's not just our school district because school districts across the valley are closing schools because of this plight but it also is an opportunity for students who are inclined to drop out of school and she hopes that our district sees that this is not happening.

Ms. Roa stated that we have a very good mix of students from the District enrolled in UPSP as another choice for our parents and we have in fact, almost 40% of the students coming from out of district at the University Public Schools. Having these choices for our parents affirms the Strategic Plan that our parents wanted, to have their students in a K-8 campus. She stated that not all parents want their children in K-8, but some do.

Financial Model: Ms. Roa stated that in our Collaboration Agreement, the ADM that University Public School receives through the base-support level and their Special Assistance, we receive 10% of that money. The revenues that the District can expect to receive in two payments, half in January and the other half in June, will be around \$300,000.

Dr. Marston stated that at some time the board will need to see the totals expended on the Bond Projects and they will have to be figured in as a one-time expense also.

Guest:

Ms. Debra S. Gomez

Interim Executive Director of UPSI

University Public Schools, Inc.

Ms. Gomez addressed the board and stated that they went on home visits for every student who had been at the Prep and who had registered, filled out the registration sheet and had not enrolled. She stated that Dr. Stark is correct in that a lot of those homes were in the Garfield area and they were empty or people were cleaning up houses and saying that they had moved. A lot of the homes were shuttered with white posters on them and she can't tell us how many addresses they went to, but they found addresses that weren't real addresses and those types of things. She stated that they currently have 343 seventh and eighth grade students at UPSP and breaking down the numbers, 171 are seventh graders and 163 are eighth graders. Ms. Gomez stated that the ACE Students are integrated into the classrooms, some ended up in the departmentalized sections and most of them ended up in the Clusters. She stated that they have the ED Self-Contained Classes which has also grown from the original four that were at the Prep last year and they now have 7 children in there and are over-capacity so they're looking at their staffing there. As of yesterday, their enrollment is actually about 678 students and they are still accepting students. Based on their Pupil/Teacher Ratio, they are over 30 per classroom, more at 33 except in the 1-2 which is holding steady at about 28 or 29 per classroom.

Ms. Roa stated that she got an opportunity to take a mini tour of UPSP and it certainly makes you want to go back and stay longer. She stated that the atmosphere was wonderful and she believes it is a transformation from what they had before and the different grade levels also gave a different feel for the actual school and seeing them all in their maroon and khaki uniforms, excited to be there and the teachers, excited to be there was great. The room where the wall was removed so they could have two rooms to

flow between in terms of the Cluster Program, held lots of student-engagement. She stated that she and Mr. Lind are very anxious to meet with Ms. Gomez and to learn more about the Teacher-Mentor Program which is receiving a lot of attention, as to how the full-year contract for teachers works with their 90-Minutes Professional Development embedded every day for them. She stated that she is very happy to report that from a bottom-line perspective what we said we thought was going to happen, did happen and surpassed their expectations and affirms our Strategic Plan.

Dr. Marston asked the Superintendent how the joint meetings of our administration and ESP and joint teacher-training is working out and Ms. Roa replied that administrators are invited to attend all of the administrative meetings, but right now because it's the first year and because of the opening of a new school, they take turns coming in to our administrators' meetings. She stated that they are welcome and they are considered part of our team. She stated that the training we are doing right now in Professional Development is focusing on our Reading Intervention Specialists and how to use them in our schools so it's not really as applicable as joint teacher-training at this point but she hopes to meet with Tom and Debbie and plan the Professional Development Calendar together.

Ms. Gomez stated that Ms. Roa is correct and because of the school's opening, neither one of the administrators felt that they could be out of school. She stated that they will take turns attending PESD administrator meetings so that there is always an administrator at UPSP. Ms. Gomez stated that their focus right now is on the instruction and curriculum and the Master Teachers and the Director of the Tap Program are in classrooms on a daily basis. They are taking very small baby steps because they have some brand-new teachers with an education degree, Teach for America Teachers who are brand new who have a degree in another field and teachers with experience who are coming to this school in an entirely new curricular instructional environment, so everyone is learning together.

2. Receive and Discuss Student Services Update – Tom Lind

Mr. Lind stated that the proposed reorganization of Student Services began early last summer and significant changes have been made to allow them time to assess our needs in Student Services and to take some time to analyze our work and make some recommendations. Mr. Lind summarized the vacancies and status of positions at schools and at the district office. He introduced Ms. Joanne Phillips who has been working with us for the last few months in our analysis of Student Services.

Guest:

Ms. Joanne Phillips
Arizona Education Cadre

Ms. Phillips reported that the reorganization is a very proactive situation, expectations for positive things are running high, and we're well along that path. She stated that one of the main tasks in reorganization is focusing on the actual tasks and activities and how those activities impact the job that needs to be done and then identifying folks within the organization who have the skills and expertise so we can maximize and build strength from within.

Ms. Phillips stated that she knows that everyone is familiar with the terms AYP and when we don't meet AYP, it's a pretty serious consequence. We're looking to see how we can get that up and unfortunately kids with disabilities very often are part of that group that stop you from making AYP and so, a key focus is how are we going to support the efforts for this district to maintain AYP status and make sure that Special Education is on the AYP track. Ms. Phillips reported the district must maintain "Meets Requirements" status, and as a Special Education Director for 27 years she can tell us how to build capacity from within by providing mentoring support and coaching.

Student Code of Conduct: Ms. Phillips stated that Phoenix Elementary does not have a current Code of Conduct. We want to have consistency if a draft is in process. Social Workers, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy staff have been trained on Genesee (computerized records management software).

She stated that you can actually drop your status from Meets Requirement to Needs Intervention just based upon the data-reporting and this is very, very important.

We have the hiring of Speech Pathologists, at least one Physical Therapist. A Ph.D. level Psychologist who is supervising the intern in a grow-your-own program, which is a very positive thing to do. She stated that they are evaluating the effectiveness of Psyche Reports and that's something that has to happen so the appropriate supervision is happening. The same thing is occurring with Speech and Language Therapy and stated that we probably have an over-abundance of vendors but when we're the ones who are being paid by the hour and we can determine who's eligible and build your caseload and you get paid for every kid you staff, it's called "Feathering Your Own Nest". It doesn't happen intentionally, but it's always a by-product so they're setting up eligibility criteria so there is consistency, so if a child is at Garfield, at Herrera, at Kenilworth, it makes no difference; it's consistent and she thinks that's absolutely important. She stated that the same thing goes for OT and PT; it's that consistency.

Dr. Marston stated that she noticed that we have a weekly report on which positions are open and our Licensed Professionals which include the people being discussed, those positions remain open and she wants to be sure that our contract situation with the contract support people allows us to hire without penalty when we have somebody else in the position. Ms. Phillips responded that typically, contracts have a 30-day clause and Mr. Baca would probably be able to better address that or perhaps Mr. Dickason, but typically, contracts for procurement for vendor services have a 30-day termination clause for either the vendor or the district can terminate the contract.

Ms. Phillips informed the board that they are embarking on various staff development for Paraprofessional Educators so that teachers know how to very effectively use their Paraprofessional Educators and Paraprofessional Educators will also know what their roles and responsibilities are.

Autism Training: Ms. Phillips stated that as we've probably heard, the incidence of Autism is 1 in 150 whether it's PESD or New Zealand it doesn't make a difference, that pretty much is the incidence. Just to put that in perspective, Down Syndrome is 1 in 990 and we see those kids walking around because they're obvious to us. We don't see Autism because it doesn't look different, unless we see flapping and some of those stereotypic behaviors. We need to deal appropriately with them because fewer than half have retardation, which means that most of them are can-do capable kids, but we just need to know how to work with them appropriately. She stated that we have training on the agenda.

Assessing Equipment Needs: So we don't purchase equipment needlessly and the equipment that we do have is used effectively.

There is a tremendous increase in coordinating with other district departments, with Assessment Department, with Human Resources, with Procurement, much, much better collaboration and communication so people are working hand in hand as a team for more effective results.

Updating Special Education Procedures: Ms. Phillips stated that the Federal Law was revised in 2004 and the rates came out in 2008 and we just got supplemental rates in December 2008.

Data: Ms. Phillips stated that we have lots of data and we collect data on everything, however, analyzing that data and making efficient use of that data is where we're lacking.

Challenges: The biggest challenge we face 2 points is maintaining our PDA Determination of Meets Requirements and maintaining AYP Status. We need to hire our related services staff and cut back on the dollars spent to vendors; you'll save about 30-35% and that's a huge amount when you're talking of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Teacher-Training for General Education: Principal-training, there needs to be a common vision; when we talk about inclusion, we all have to have the same image in our minds, otherwise, we're not working toward the same goal. We need to maintain effective systems and procedures and no matter what we do, if we don't operate on the philosophy that if it isn't broken, don't fix it, it's not as effective as it could be. You need to scrutinize it and make sure you're operating at optimum effectiveness. And everything we do, everything links back to effectiveness for kids.

And finally, communication; Communication and collaborating with every department with every individual in the district and that probably is one of the toughest goals to achieve. So with that, she stated that she thinks we are on the road; she thinks we have a tremendous start, a lot of work has gone on through the months of August and into September and we're further ahead than she anticipated.

Ms. Phillips further stated that the district now has a PBIS (a Positive Behavior Instructional Support Coordinator) and the focus of that is to set up positive ways that kids can succeed.

Dr. Marston informed Ms. Phillips that she's heard many good things about her and she's glad to finally meet her in this context and she thanked her for the wonderful presentation.

Ms. Roa reported that we are implementing Kids at Hope this year which is going to help us have that explicit relationship with the child when they know they have one caring adult.

Ms. Roa thanked staff for the tough work and the hard decisions that they make and she also thanked the Governing Board for supporting us with some of our tough decisions in order to get where we are today and know that we have the support to move forward.

Mr. Lind informed Dr. Marston that he would like to acknowledge that working collaboratively with Joanne, they are looking at an organizational structure which is also presented on the handout. They will be coming back to the board in a timely manner to discuss job descriptions, positions and salary schedules and he wanted to acknowledge the assistance that Joanne has provided them and they will be coming back with that presentation at a later date at a regular Governing Board Meeting.

1. Receive and Discuss Enrollment Update – Kenneth Baca

Mr. Baca stated that the District, in comparison to last year's 40th Day has experienced a drop of 441 students. Mr. Allsworth asked where we are in January in comparison to September and Mr. Baca replied that, typically in December, we've increased slightly.

Mr. Baca stated that the District average of PTR (Pupil-Teacher Ratio) is:

K-8 PTR: 25-1 K-6 PTR: 26-1 K-3 PTR: 24-1 4-6 PTR: 28-1 7-8 PTR: 24-1

Mr. Baca stated that not all our schools have 7th and 8th grade yet and that 7th and 8th grade is departmentalized, not self-contained, except for Dunbar and Faith North.

Ms. Roa asked Mr. Baca to describe the differences between departmentalized 7th and 8th grades and self-contained 7th and 8th grade. Mr. Baca replied that a teacher who has a self-contained 7th and 8th grade classroom teaches all subjects. If it's a Departmentalized classroom, the teacher is teaching Science and the kids go to a person who teaches Math, Language Arts and Social Studies, and that's four different teachers.

*Dr. Marston requested a five-minute Break at 9:40 a.m.
The Governing Board Returned from Break at 9:45 a.m.*

4. Receive and Discuss the Strategic Plan Update – Tom Lind

Mr. Lind reported the District is revitalizing its Strategic Planning process with a new Governing Board Member, new staff members, and new community members and it is really time to revisit our Blueprint for Student Success as we are approaching the fifth year. He stated that we will continue our focus on improving student achievement as well as the alignment to the Arizona Standards and Rubric for School Improvement and we also want to imbed the work and needs of our District's Improvement Plan for corrective action as well as adapting to the changing needs of our community. In working with the Strategic Plan, it is our plan to have two teams. The Steering Committee will provide the guidance, the direction and the communication and that team will be comprised of the Cabinet Members, one Governing Board Member as well as Sara Bresnahan representing our Public Relations. It is our goal that the Steering Committee will meet about once a month to review the work of the Design Team and the Design Team is doing the work in revisiting the goals of the Strategic Plan. As a Cabinet Member, he stated that he would be facilitating that along with a principal, a director, a teacher, an association representative as well as certified and classified Support Staff members and again, our Public Relations Team.

The Design Team will bring in Content Experts as needed. Our goal is to review and update the existing blueprint and we will also want to communicate our findings and recommendations to the Steering Committee who will ultimately bring information back to the Governing Board in a timely manner.

Mr. Lind stated that we want to affirm our District Vision and our Mission and our Academic Anchors. They remain strong with us and we want to affirm them. We want to review and update the goals in the current Strategic Plan and we want to have a Strategic Plan that's a vibrant, living document and something that we can easily modify as needed when changes occur. Staff has relied on our plan for direction in the last five years with our Signature Schools and our staffing models for Pre K-8 classrooms as well as our facilities improvements.

Mr. Lind stated that we're fortunate to have the facilitation working with us through the Creative Leadership Partners; Wendy Larson and David Hume are those identified in that organization who will be working with us to help keep us on track and to help organize the work of both the Steering Council and the Design Team.

Mr. Lind reported this facilitation is funded with Title I Funds as part of our LEA Improvement Process.

B. Community Communications

None

D. Board Reports and Requests

1. Board Direction to the Superintendent (if necessary)

Dr. Marston directed a question to Mr. Dickason and Ms. Roa: Since the Governor's Budget Bill requires policy changes including things like we can't have a policy allowing Association Members' time off for paid time for Association business, do those policies go into effect on November 24 and can we have our policies in line by that time? Mr. Dickason stated that they've been working co-operatively with the ASBA Policy people as they have looked at regulations and then reinterpret and make recommendations on policy, so he has not heard from them what their timing is, but they are likewise aware of it and November 24 would certainly be our objective.

Ms. Bliss stated that she has a request for the Superintendent and her staff. She stated that she also attended the Legal Conference and she was very interested in the Solar Energy breakout session and the law that may or may not affect that, and she would hope that we are doing everything to be on top of what Scottsdale is doing and that we perhaps, initiate some kind of process where we start asking a

company to come in and look at putting solar energy panels on our schools. Mr. Baca stated that they will be providing the Board with the Capital update shortly and that will be included.

2. Board Report

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Ruth Ann Marston
Board President

RAM: evm