

Oakland Unified School District

DRAFT

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Minutes (Long)

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

6:00 PM

Special Meeting

**United for Success (formerly Calvin Simmons) Middle School, 2101 35th
Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602**

Board of Education

President Noel Gallo and Vice President Gary Yee

***Directors: Jody London, Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Alice Spearman, David Kakishiba,
Christopher Dobbins***

Student Directors: Wesley Sims and Eric Adams

Staff: Edgar Rakestraw, Jr., Secretary, Board of Education

schools involved are Alliance Academy, Elmhurst Community Prep, Roots International Academy, Explore College Prep and United for Success Academy. President noted for the audience that translation services are available. President Yee said Dr. Smith will explain what is involved in the grant application and the requirements.

Dr. Smith said the staff will be talking about the schools and what recommendations came from the community on how the District should proceed to support these schools. Dr. Smith said Troy Flint, Communications Director, will begin the presentation.

Troy Flint said the purpose of today's Public Hearing is to discuss the potential implications of accepting School Improvement Grants. Mr. Flint provided background information on School Improvement Grants and how the District reached this point in the process. He said School Improvement Grants are a set of reforms in which the Federal Government offers money to school districts that are targeted for improvement. He said School Improvement Grants are targeted at schools according to Federal standards viewed as not meeting a certain level of academic progress, primarily Title I and Title II Schools which serve a large number of low income families. He said in March 2010 the State released a list of schools which identified a number of schools that were eligible for School Improvements. He said if schools elect to go forward and apply for the School Improvement Grant they can receive the funds if the schools agree to a certain set of reforms which the State and the Federal Government has designated necessary to receive the money. He said these reforms are tied to the Federal No Child Left Behind Law. He said states are required to designate these schools as Persistently Low Performing. He said in Early March five District schools were named to this list. He said Explore College Prep has been marked for closure by the Board and the Superintendent prior to the release of this list. He said the other four schools will be discussed in the Public Hearing today. He said the District has to move forward as a community and decide how best to address the School Improvement Grant process; if grant application is beneficial for the Oakland community. He said all schools on the list are eligible to receive funding but in order to receive the money the schools must follow one of four models. (1) The Turn Around Model - Closing the school and enrolling the students in other higher performing schools. (2) The Restart Model - Closing the school and reopening under a charter school operator. (3) Closing and consolidating the school with the option of replacing the principal and at least 50% of the staff, adopting new governance and new instructional programs. (4) The Transformation Model - Involves a host of organizational, structural and curricular changes such as expanding school time, enhancing community involvement and improving the effectiveness of the principal, teachers, the instructional program and replacing the principal if the person has been in that role for two or more years. He said these are the reforms a school will have to adopt if they decide to apply for a School Improvement Grant. He said no school is compelled to apply. He said if a school chooses not to apply, the school is not eligible for any of the improvement funding. He said the purpose of tonight's meeting is to take comments on all the above and for the public to advise the Board on how it feels the Board should move forward in determining if the four schools on the list will apply for the School Improvement Grants and if so, which reform model they should adopt in their application.

President Yee asked Superintendent Smith to talk about the timeline for decision making and who is involved in making this decision.

Dr. Smith said David Montes de Oca, Charter School Office Coordinator, will talk about

the process and the timeline.

David Montes de Oca said the Network Officers for each of the schools on the list were engaged as primary leaders in the school based efforts around evaluating the grant options and the capacity of the schools to potentially pursue the funds. He said there are additional support staff at the District level in the Grant Development Office who have experience in the management of Federal and State grants, the Communications Director and at the site level there are staff, community and parents. He said the timeline is pursuant to the grant application requirement that there must be a Public Hearing tonight. He said on May 26th there will be an opportunity for District staff to present a proposal for a grant application to be brought to the California Department of Education and State Board of Education for their support in pursuit of these funds.

President Yee asked if each school will be treated separately or does all four schools have to do exactly the same thing?

Mr. Montes de Oca said the School Improvement Grant in this round is defined as a grant that is a Lead Education Applicant (LEA) Grant. He said the LEA is applying for the funds and within the application it identifies which specific schools it intends to prioritize in the application and which schools it commits will undergo whatever transformation that has been adopted for those schools. He said in each case it could be a scenario that the LEA could make a decision to pursue a different reform for each of the schools designated on the list or it may choose a single reform and apply it to each of the schools. He said in each of the reforms you could have different components manifest in different ways at each of the sites.

Dr. Smith said the District do not have to apply for these grants for all four schools. He said as the Lead Education Organization the District needs to decide what is in the best interest of the entire District and take into consideration community context and where the community is at each school.

Board Member Discussion

Vice President Dobbins said if the Board decides to exercise the options, all four options would mean removing the principal. He said the principal at Roots International has been principal at that school for more than two years.

Mr. Montes de Oca said the Federal Government has interpreted the ability to have an exception made for a principal that has been at the site less than two years. He said they have interpreted that to mean two years from this year.

Vice President Dobbins said that principal is in her fourth year at Roots International.

Mr. Montes de Oca said under a Transformation Model or under the Turn Around Model there would be implications to remove that principal.

Vice President Dobbins asked since the principal has been at the school for four years, the two years would not start until the District decides to accept the application?

Mr. Montes de Oca said it is two years back. He said two years is two years from the Fall of this year. He said she is beyond that instance.

Vice President Dobbins asked were there implications for the other three principals?

Mr. Montes de Oca said the implications for certain Reform Models would affect the leadership at Alliance Academy and certain Reform Models would not have implications for United for Success or Elmhurst Community Prep. He said some would and some would not.

Director Spearman said she wanted to hear from the Superintendent regarding Alliance Academy and Elmhurst Community Prep to find out if the information the Superintendent received is the same information she received of the school's wishes.

Dr. Smith said there have been considerable community meetings and conversations about where the schools are and about how to accelerate their achievement. He said for Elmhurst Community Prep and United for Success the District is encouraged in taking one of the options. He said he will bring a formal recommendation to the Board.

Director Spearman said she is concerned that the people representing the schools are staff and there are no parents represented tonight.

Dr. Smith said he's had conversations with some community members and has documentation from both schools that he has shared with some community members that was affirmed. He said when the final recommendation is brought to the Board he will have all that information organized. He said the District can ensure there will be more parent representation at the next Board Meeting.

[President Yee recessed the meeting at 6:42 P.M., when Director Gallo momentarily left the meeting and the Board lost its quorum. President Yee resumed the meeting at 6:44 with Board Members Gallo, Spearman, Vice President Dobbins and President Yee present.]

Public Comments

David Reese, Elmhurst Teacher, said staff and community voted unanimously to apply for the SIG Grant, the Transformation Model. He said community meetings were held with OCO.

Amy Carraza, Elmhurst Teacher, said there have been many community meetings and everyone in the community is supporting this grant application.

Cassandra Chin, United for Success Teacher, said the process started with the community. She said the teachers and staff stepped back and let the family advocate organize the parents to have this conversation explaining the grant process to the parents. She said multiple meetings were held and with the information they had parents deliberated and unanimously decided to support the Transformation Model. She said the parent's recommendation was brought to staff for discussion and staff unanimously supported the parent's recommendation.

Director Gallo said he wanted to commend United for Success School. He said the school went through a lengthy process involving parents, students and staff. He said there was parent inclusion.

Dr. Smith said when the recommendation is brought to the Board for approval all the written documentation from the meetings will be presented with a recommendation on which option staff thinks is the best option for the District to pursue. He said the District is exploring the waiver parts of the teacher's contract with OEA. He said to the extent the District can help each school explore the curricular intense reform the District needs to do that. He said how the District goes about doing that he said he will bring to the Board where he thinks the District can push really hard (learning time) and the waivers around content (using other instructional materials). Dr. Smith said it is possible that he will bring to the Board his recommendation which may be different than what the school site brought. He said the way the legislation is written it is under his purview. He said his recommendation to the Board will include taking into consideration what the schools have done. He said he has to do what is in the best interest of the District. He said he will bring that recommendation to the Board with all the reasons why and how he think things should be intensified around curriculum and the additional support. He said his recommendation will include feedback from the schools and their recommendation. He said the schools recommendations may be accepted as proposed or amended. Dr. Smith said he will give to the Board in writing why he is accepting the proposal.

Director Gallo said if students want to compete in the world they have to be immersed in technology today. He said other school districts are not buying textbooks, he said the textbooks are electronic and the children take the electronic device home with them.

Gia Truong, Network Executive Officer, said when the District looks at successful schools quality instruction improves student results. She said quality instruction means the instruction is standards based. She said standards based means the District needs to understand the standards and how students are being assessed at the end of the school year.

President Yee closed the Public Hearing at 7:27 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed

Roll Call (Secretary' Observation)

Noel Gallo absent at 6:42 P.M. as noted in Legislative File 10-0968.

Roll Call: Present: Wesley Sims, Alice Spearman, Christopher Dobbins and Gary Yee
Absent: Eric Adams, Jody London, David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge and Noel Gallo

Recess

President Yee recessed the meeting at 6:42 P.M. for lack of quorum when Director Gallo momentarily left the meeting.

Roll Call (Secretary' Observation)

Noel Gallo present at 6:44 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: Noel Gallo, Alice Spearman, Christopher Dobbins and Gary Yee
Absent: Eric Adams, Wesley Sims, Jody London, David Kakishiba and Jumoke Hodge

Reconvene

President Yee reconvened the meeting at 6:44 P.M. when Director Gallo returned, establishing a quorum as noted in Legislative File 10-0968.

D. Adjournment

President Yee adjourned the meeting at 7:28 P.M.

Prepared By: _____

Approved By: _____