



MINUTES

Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education

Board Retreat

Tuesday, April 28, 2015 • 10:00 a.m.

Professional Development Center

In attendance: Sra. Maria A. Flores, President
Mr. Chuck Davis, Vice-President
Mrs. Barbara Hall, Secretary
Mr. Maury Castro, Member

Superintendent Stan Rounds was also in attendance. Mr. Ed Frank was absent.

The Board retreat began at 10:18 a.m. with President Flores facilitating the meeting.

The outcomes identified for the retreat are to discuss the status of the LCPS budget, staffing, high school schedules, teacher planning periods and Policy BDA Board Organization.

Purpose of Retreat: To establish purpose, direction and focus on student success and establish budget priorities.

I. Board Discussion

A. Staffing

Dr. Elizabeth Marrufo provided a brief overview on how staffing is conducted in the district and the enrollment data source that is used. A summary of the number of students, teachers and pupil-teacher ratios was provided for elementary, middle and high schools. The summary reflected the number of students increased from SY 2011-12 by 135 and the number of teachers decreased by 3.29. The pupil-teacher ratio increased by .2 at the elementary level. In middle schools, there were 74 fewer students from SY 2011-12; 23 more teachers and the pupil-teacher ratio was 1.4 lower. At the high school level, there were 516 fewer students, 41.1 more teachers and pupil-teacher ratio is 3.3 less from the 2011-12 school year to the present. A staffing projections worksheet based on student enrollment data and teacher staffing for elementary, middle and high school levels was provided. A discussion ensued with regard to staffing for ELL classrooms versus advanced placement classrooms. President Flores stated she would like classrooms to be equal across the board and shared her concerns regarding absenteeism.

B. Budget

Mr. Terry Dean provided the Board with a series of "bucket" items to be discussed to balance the budget. Each bucket item has a dollar value associated with it. He stated the budget cuts necessary to balance budget is \$7.6 million. A list of bucket priorities was also provided for a total of \$11.7 million of options in cutting costs. Increase factors to the budget such as risk insurance, medical costs, utilities and transportation were also discussed as well as reductions to utility costs, staffing positions and transportation costs were also discussed. Superintendent Rounds asked the Board for guidance in setting a list of priorities to balance the budget. Mr. Castro asked if cuts could be made in other areas other than staffing; Superintendent Rounds stated that 92% of the budget is in staffing and the other 8% would not make a difference in cost

cuts as staffing is the majority of the budget. Superintendent Rounds stated an upside down budget will not be accepted by the Public Education Department. There was a discussion regarding a three-day furlough for employees which would provide a cost savings to the district of \$2.1 million. The three day pay reduction would be divided out by each pay period for the employee's contract year.

Board members chose their bucket priorities which totaled a reduction of \$6.1 million to the \$7.6 million deficit. There was further discussion regarding a reduction in educational assistants to meet the \$1.6 million negative balance. A reduction of educational assistants by half would provide a cost savings of \$700,000 which leaves a negative balance of \$999,000. Board members did not support a cut in custodial staff. Mr. Castro inquired on the thoughts of teachers and custodial staff on budget cuts. Superintendent Rounds stated he has met with NEA representatives and they understand the budget concerns. Mr. Castro also asked how the cuts will effect instruction and Dr. Sanchez responded that student enrollment numbers are not as high as previous years and quality of teachers is also a factor.

Mr. Dean will prepare a budget with the numbers provided by the Board today and will provide alternatives for the remaining upside down budget. President Flores would like a conversation with CSEC regarding the proposed cut of custodians by .5 for every two buildings instead of one per every two buildings. There was also a discussion with regards to cuts in assessment costs which could possibly provide a cost cut of \$80,000-\$100,000; however, there would be an impact on teacher evaluations. Dr. Sanchez will provide a fact sheet of assessment costs to the board of with all formative assessments. President Flores would like a letter provided to the Public Education Department outlining the district's budget cuts including costs of assessments because of budget concerns.

C. High School Schedules and Teacher Planning Periods

High School principals were asked by the Board to join in the discussion regarding scheduling at the high schools. President Flores asked Superintendent Rounds not to be a part of the discussion with principals as they may not be forthcoming with information because of his presence. She stated the Board discussed the matter amongst themselves, and decided the Superintendent would not be a part of the discussion. She also stated that the Board would like Board representative at all principal meetings for the purposes of evaluating the Superintendent. Superintendent Rounds stated that according to State Statute and Administrative Code, principals are under the employ of the Superintendent. As he is not willing to violate the law, Superintendent Rounds stated he will remain in the back of the room during the Board's discussion with principals. President Flores stated her understanding to Superintendent Rounds of his not wanting to violate the law; but asked that he consider his removal for this one time. Administrators shared their support of the Superintendent's attendance in the discussion with principals and stated their concern that board members' presence at principal meetings may inhibit principal discussions with the Superintendent, as they are comfortable in speaking with him. Mr. Davis would like a report on principal meetings. Superintendent Rounds offered minutes to be taken at principal meetings to share with board members. All high school principals were present for the discussion; Kathie Davis, Principal at Rio Grande Preparatory Institute, was absent. Superintendent Rounds remained in the back of the room for the discussion.

President Flores asked principals their thoughts on staffing and planning periods at each high school and Mr. Castro asked principals their thoughts on testing. Principals stated testing is excessive and teacher morale is low. They would remove the PARCC assessment particularly the EOC and ELY components. Mike Montoya, Principal at Centennial High School, stated that EOC's begin too early; there is no teaching and a lot of disruption; and data is not received until summer which is not helpful. In regards to staffing, Mr. Montoya stated he is not losing staff; he has eight temporary termination positions that he will have to post and re-hire. David Day, Principal at Onate High School, stated he is losing eight positions; four people are retiring that will not be replaced. Jed Hendee, Principal at Las Cruces High School, stated he is losing 16 positions; four positions due to retirements or terminations; 11 positions will be cut. JoBeth Hawk, Principal at Mayfield High School, stated MHS is losing 12 positions; six retirements and some resignations. She also stated that some of the retiring positions will have to be replaced. Jennifer Amis, Principal at Arrowhead Park Early College High School and Arrowhead Park Medical Academy, stated staff will remain stable. Principals collectively agreed that making cuts is difficult; but necessary at this time.

Mike Montoya stated that CHS is on a blended block schedule and teachers have 2.5 planning periods. Principals shared that all high schools are on the same schedule, with a slight variation in passing periods and all high schools have night classes. There are fewer staff meetings, etc. to be conscious of teacher planning periods.

Three principals agree to moving to a 24 credit requirement for graduation; three disagreed stating the 24 credit requirement does not give students room for adjustment if failing their courses; and it does not raise expectations and opportunities for students; no room for high quality electives. Jed Hendee suggested a move to 26 credits for the Board's consideration to not lower expectations. The German program at Las Cruces High School is dissolving due to low student enrollment. Dr. Sanchez is working on a virtual class for German so students at different schools can participate. A discussion ensued with regard to Spanish classes not filling and language classes no longer a requirement by the state.

Principal Mike Montoya stated to Board members that principals trust the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent whole-heartedly stating "*We have a great thing going in this district because of the Superintendent. Things do get hard, but we do it together.*" Onate High School Principal, David Day, stated that four years ago OHS was close to being a probationary school. "It is because of the Superintendent and his administrative staff that OHS is now a high rated school."

D. Policy BDA Board Organization Enrollments

Mr. Castro stated his disagreement with the proposed policy. He would like to be able to vote on board officers based on experience and contribution; not on a basis of rotating. Mrs. Hall stated the Board needs to make a determination of leadership, and board members should vote the way they feel is appropriate. President Flores stated her agreement with Mr. Castro and Mrs. Hall. Mr. Davis would like two year terms for officers to be considered. The policy was tabled.

Dr. Sanchez will provide a fact sheet of assessment costs to the board of formative assessments.

The following is a list of action items derived from the Board’s retreat:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Person(s) of Responsibility</u>
Fact Sheet of Assessment Costs		Dr. Steven Sanchez
PED Letter regarding Budget Costs		Superintendent Rounds

The Retreat adjourned at 1:48p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary

Minutes taken by Tina Gonzalez.