



San Francisco Board of Education
Parent Advisory Council

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the PAC

May 18, 2010

I. Attendance

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ruth Barajas, Nancy Gapasin Gnass, Mandy Johnson, Stelly Kuo, Natasha LaVine, Quran Mays, Michelle Menegaz.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Carolyn Alexander, Georgia Bratt Williams, Un Un Che, Beatriz Gudino, Diane Huang.

ALSO PRESENT: Ruth Grabowski, PAC Staff; Chris Armentrout, SFUSD; Pecolia Manigo, Coleman Advocates.

II. Call to Order/Roll Call

Michelle Menegaz called meeting to order at 6:25pm.

Addressing the issue of quorum for the meeting, Ruth G. explained that Rochelle called to say she had to step down for personal/family reasons, and Tiana has vacated her seat (by not attending since that one meeting, with no communication about other meetings). Therefore there are only 12 members of the PAC, so quorum is 7.

Nancy moved to approve the Minutes from the April 20th PAC meeting. Ruth B. seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Update on SFUSD Issues

Ruth G. gave an update on several issues. The district and UESF leaders reached conceptual agreement on a proposed contract; they still have to work out some details, then UESF members need to vote to ratify the agreement. A key point is agreeing to four furlough days, which means they can avoid the big class size increases in grades K-3. They had sent out 700 notices initially and this means they can rescind most of them (probably laying off 150 people).

Ruth G. attended a meeting last week where district staff, community groups and school representatives from the 10 “persistently underperforming schools” spoke about their ideas for reforms, for the Student Improvement Grant (SIG) proposal to the state. The proposal is from the district as a whole, so they need to frame the individual schools’ ideas as an overall theme. People from New Day for Learning are writing pieces of the grant referring to community engagement, out-of-school-time programs (e.g. before and afterschool) and governance. The meeting of principals was inspiring in terms of hearing their sincere reflection on what is and is not working at sites. There are still a lot of questions related to what’s happening among the ten sites, which ones will begin process next year & which the year after, etc.

The Board's Ad-Hoc Committee on Student Assignment met - the staff presented their plans and timeline for implementing the new system. PPS is working with staff at the EPC on outreach and communication plans, and monitoring the overall process.

The Board's meeting to discuss the Parent Engagement Plan was canceled - but it will be discussed at the Budget Committee on May 27.

The district is planning to redesign the Student Information System, and is asking for community members to participate in the review process (looking at the vendors' proposals and models) to help choose a new system. Ruth G. has applications to be on that committee.

Chris Armentrout added some points to the update: There are two levels to the School Improvement Grants - old money and new. The old SIG was allocated to the district for the same schools to be spent between now and Dec. 30th. The district is applying for new funding for the ten low performing schools - Jorge Cuevas Antillon is heading up the grant-writing (he oversees federal and state budgeting and compliance). The grant process is a huge challenge logistically, and is due June 1st. It has been challenging to get comprehensive parent engagement in the process. Superintendent put forward that we're not going to do all ten schools at once - the District will put together a plan that will include all schools but probably in phases. Willie Brown Academy will be closed next year for rebuilding and will reopen as something different. Different ideas out there about what to do with students now at Willie Brown.

IV. Coleman Advocates - Advocating for Education Equity

Pecolia Manigo from Coleman Advocates gave a brief presentation about their work.

Last year Coleman worked hard to get A-G requirements passed to get students college-ready. They worked with students and parents to go deeper and think about education reform, and drew out steps the district needs to take to make their policy a reality. They identified over 200 benchmarks (things that have to be achieved to make this policy work) and came up with indicators to gauge whether it works. They prioritized the top 21, top 11 will be implemented, others are already happening but will be monitored. The main question is, What are the end results - where do our students go? The district needs to look at outcomes - what happens to students after they leave SFUSD (whether they graduate, or simply leave).

They're about to release a 100-page report on promising practices and research on benchmarks. "Honors for all" just means a high quality education for all since there is no such thing as "honors" in middle school. Our curriculum should be rigorous for all students. They will do more community engagement in the future and will let the PAC know about this.

V. Teacher and Administrator Quality

Nancy presented an update on the TAQ team's research and findings. Members of the team propose changing name to be more inclusive - to PPA (parents for program accountability).

They're been working in response to what we have heard from parents - why can't all school be quality schools? Parents don't know what to do when they have questions or concerns. The TAQ team wants

the district to create a communication system for parents to understand standards and what their rights are, and what the process is for parents to follow when that is not happening.

They met with Ramon Martinez at Family Voice and with other district staff, and worked closely with Deena Zacharin to advocate for these issues in the Parent Engagement Plan, and want to advocate for a flow chart to be created that show parents how it would work. They also want to better understand the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) teacher coaching/accountability system. Nancy met with head of PAR and coaches - found out that principals aren't doing their job or marking teachers as "needs improvement".

Also have been looking at standards, trying to make sure that standards are taught consistently everywhere and that there are baseline assessments, and to have comparisons across the district. They're trying to figure out how to support these different efforts.

An action plan needs to be developed to make sure these different issues are moving forward. Some ideas include meeting with Board members on specific committees on relevant issues. For example, Kim-Shree Maufas, Sandy Fewer and Rachel Norton are on the Personnel/Labor Relations Committee. Should also bring this up in a meeting with Richard Carranza. Pecolia mentioned that the district will do things the parents are behind - they need to have that public demand to back them up.

Nancy pointed out the district needs to redefine social justice - not just economic and racial injustices but academic equity and justice.

Ruth G. pointed out these issues fit in what the PAC has called "Teacher and administrator standards, support, and accountability" and summarized how this could be framed in the PAC's report to the Board on May 25th. Mandy moved to approve the suggestion, and Stelly seconded this framing of the report:

What needs to happen in the district:

- *Communication and transparency:* The district needs to make sure parents understand grade-level standards, know what their rights are, and what the process is for parents to follow when their children aren't getting what they need.
- *Standards:* Standards need to be consistent across classrooms and schools. The district needs to make sure that standards are taught consistently everywhere, and that there are baseline assessments for students.
- *Support:* Teachers and principals need to be supported to understand and meet the district's standards - especially in schools with large populations of under-served students. The PAR program needs sufficient staff to providing coaching to teachers referred to the program.
- *Accountability:* Teachers and administrators need to be held accountable. Parent evaluations should be included in the teacher and principal evaluation process. Principals need to be held accountable for making sure that teachers are able to teach to standards, and if they are not, that they're referred to the PAR program.

The PAC's next steps, for the fall:

- Ensure that specific "action plans" are developed to implement the district-wide Parent Engagement Plan, at school sites and through district offices

- Recommend that as part of this Plan, the district develop and communicate to parents a “flow chart” for what to do & where to go if you have concerns about your child’s school
- Continue doing research on how the district’s standards and curriculum are being aligned
- Meet with individual Board members and district staff to help move things forward (including members of the Board’s Personnel Committee).

VI. New PAC Member Nominations

The PAC can have up to 18 people - 15 “regular” members and three alternates. Rochelle stepped down, Tiana vacated her seat, and Diane, Mandy and Stelly are not renewing as their terms end; we currently have nine open seats. We received seven applications, and between them Michelle, Ruth B. and Ruth G. interviewed six people (one person didn’t show up for the interview).

Ruth G. presented information about each applicant, and the interview team commented on each person’s strengths and what they might contribute to the PAC’s work. Five of the six candidates have children in schools that qualify for the federal “School Improvement Grant” education reform program, which will provide important perspectives for the PAC as the district takes on these reforms.

We noted that we didn’t receive any applications from parents representing the Asian or Pacific Islander communities, which is a major weakness in the PAC’s ability to reflect the district’s student population - which is about 40% Asian/Pacific Islander.

Michelle and Ruth recommended five of the people be nominated to the PAC. They were not opposed to the sixth person, Marco Santiago, but felt that he is involved in many other organizations and advisory groups (including the DELAC) and that there may be some confusion about his role in representing the PAC to people who think he’s speaking for another group. Ruth B. advocated to include him because he is male and a more recent immigrant, and that his ability to network will give the PAC access to communities we want to hear from.

Nancy moves to recommend all six candidates and Ruth B seconded the motion. The PAC voted unanimously to recommend all six candidates for appointment to the PAC: Alberto Del Rio, Maria Garcia, Marco Santiago, Chablis Scott, Deon Stancil, and Buthienah Taha.

The PAC also agreed to hold at least two seats open for Asian/Pacific Islander communities, and to continue to do outreach and recruit parents to fill those seats in the fall. In looking at outreach for that, Ruth G. will find out who the man was came to the meeting tonight (but we did not have an interpreter).

People pointed out that we might want to be more strict about removing members who don’t come to meetings. It’s also possible to propose lowering the number of people on the PAC so that it isn’t so hard to meet quorum.

VII. Evaluate Partnerships with PPS and SFUSD

Ruth G. and Ellie Rossiter (from PPS) are meeting with Myong Leigh, Gentle Blythe and Darlene Lim on June 2nd to evaluate our community engagement partnership with the SFUSD this year. In preparation for that conversation, the PAC reflected on the strengths and challenges of this partnership.

| + / Strengths | Δ / Challenges / Wishes |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to data/info sharing • Joint strategizing re: goals, talking points and developing materials • Led to continuation of good partnerships (e.g. re: ASP) • On the whole, it's working to inform parents and to inform/impact policy - need to continue it (with improvements) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was only transparency from district staff up to the point policy was actually being developed • Across various issues - need to be clear & explicit about what's being shared • CAC Special Ed felt staff completely ignored recommendations related to Special Ed issues • In general it's hard to tell when you're being heard • The real problem re: outreach to parents from the district, about district forums: it doesn't happen. Info might go to principals but not out from there, even to families at the schools where the forums are held & definitely not to the community. For the budget forums, the PAC's name was on the flyer and it's a concern - makes us look bad (e.g. not doing outreach/publicity). The budget forums flyers weren't even in the WAD. |

VIII. Afterschool for All Advisory Council

Ruth B. is the PAC's representative to the Afterschool for All Advisory Council, which is meeting on May 20th to consider recommendations from the Council's workgroups. The PAC was asked to co-sponsor one recommendation: to expand online communication systems among school staff, and between staff and families, to include afterschool program staff.

The specific recommendation states: Ask SFUSD to continue to explore the use of School Loop (or any future online networking/communication system for school staff and parents) to enhance coordination between school day and afterschool, and to incorporate parental consent language for sharing such information into the new SFUSD afterschool enrollment form.

Michelle moved that the PAC support this initiative, Nancy seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously by the PAC.

IX. PAC Budget for 2010-2011

Ruth G. presented a draft budget for 2010-2011, which included projections for actual expenditures through the end of the current fiscal year (which ends June 30). The current year is projected to go over budget several thousand dollars, for two main reasons: 1) the Lead Team agreed to apply for a \$50,000 renewal grant to the full Board of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund (rather than a \$45,000 proposal to the Fund's Executive Director) - which in the long run will provide more funding, but for this fiscal means a 6-week gap in funding; and 2) the cost of translating draft and final reports on community engagement this year, which was more than we had anticipated.

We do not have a cash-flow problem now because we received the full two-year grant from Zellerbach already. Ruth also noted that her two weeks of unpaid time could go towards hiring a consultant to support getting ready for the PAC's first meetings in the fall. Erica Grisey is available and interested in doing this, so Ruth and Michelle will follow up with her.

PAC members asked what the 10% administrative fee was, and Ruth explained that our fiscal sponsor, Community Initiatives, charges us 10% for being one of their sponsored projects - which is less than many other sponsors charge their projects. (CI handles all of the PAC's accounting and tax filings, as well as holding our grants and contract funds.)

Nancy moved to approve the draft budget and Ruth B. seconded the motion. The PAC voted unanimously to adopt the draft budget, with a revised budget to be presented in the fall.

X. Officer Elections

The PAC discussed the roles of the four officers, and who is interested/willing to play these roles.

For Chair, Natasha nominated Nancy and Ruth seconded; Nancy accepted the nomination. For Vice Chair, Nancy nominated Natasha and Ruth seconded; Natasha accepted the nomination.

The PAC unanimously elected Nancy Gapasin Gnass to be the Chair for the 2010-2011 term, and Natasha LaVine to be the Vice Chair. Nancy and Natasha would like to be "co-chairs" in practice, and PAC members suggested they could divide the different responsibilities for these positions. This will be discussed further at the PAC's meeting in June.

The Parliamentarian and Secretary will be elected in the fall, when the new members are on board and also able to fill those offices.

XI. PAC Business

For reports to the Board of Education:

- May 25: Nancy & Georgia will report on issues, recommendations and the PAC's next steps related to teacher and administrator standards and accountability.
- June 8: Michelle will present the candidates for appointment to the PAC
- June 22: Michelle will present the PAC's year-end report

XII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

XIII. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Natasha LaVine.