

**ADOPTED MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING** - The regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on the date and place mentioned above.

**CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by President McMahon at 5:07 PM.

**PRESENT:** Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Spencer, Tam

**ABSENT:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None at this time.

**ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION:** By President McMahon at 5:07 PM to discuss Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release; Conference with Labor negotiator Laurie McLachlan-Fry: AEA, CSEA, ACSA: Conference with Legal Counsel Anticipated Litigation – Significant Exposure to Litigation Pursuant to Subdivision (b) of Section 54956.9 (3 cases).

**RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION:** by President McMahon at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Paden Elementary School students and Principal.

**INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF:** Board Members and staff present introduced themselves.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA/APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION: Member Spencer**

**SECONDED: Member Mooney**

That the Board of Education adopt the agenda with the following change: pull item E-7 and consider as F-7.

**AYES:** Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Spencer, Tam

**NOES:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**CONSENT CALENDAR** – The Board of Education approved the following consent items (such items are identified by a plus (+) mark in the body of these minutes):

**+Certificated Personnel Actions:** The Board of Education 1 retirement (Wall).

**+Classified Personnel Actions:** The Board of Education approved 8 appointments (Garcia, Jones, Johnson, Koneffklatt, Perez, Flores, Akalu, Roundtree); 1 change of status (Timmons, Jr.)

**+Approval of Bill Warrants and Payroll Registers:** The Board approved warrants numbered 852932-852937, 852939-876528.

**+Resolution No. 09-0030 Approval of Budget Transfers, Increases, Decreases**

**+Part-Time Employment with Full Retirement Credit**

**+California High School Exit Exam Waiver for Students with Special Needs**

**+One Time Site Discretionary Funding proposals**

- +Approval of High School Course Description for AP Physics C
- +Project Pipeline – Recommendations for Credentials
- +Approval of Student Teaching Contracts
- +Approval of Lease Agreement with YMCA
- +Approval of Lease Agreements with Alameda Family Services – Head Start Program
- +Resolution No. 09-0031 Acceptance of Bid for the Supply of Transportation Services for the Special Education Department
- +Approval of Donations

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of the regular meeting of May 12, 2009 were considered.

**MOTION: Member Mooney**

**SECONDED: Member Jensen**

That the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 12, 2009 as submitted.

**AYES:** Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Spencer, Tam

**NOES:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Written Correspondence:** The Board received 375 unique, individual e-mails and correspondence supporting the Caring Schools Curriculum and 405 unique, individual e-mails and correspondence opposing the Caring Schools Curriculum.

**Superintendent’s Report:** Superintendent Kirsten Vital read a short statement in honor of Employee Appreciation Month:

Thank you for your commitment to Alameda students!

Whether you work in a classroom, on a field or a playground, in a school office or lunchroom, or in our administrative offices, your work makes it possible for thousands of children to be successful students and adults and it enables the many contributions they will one day make to society.

School District employees go about their work every day, so often without asking for or receiving the recognition they deserve. From keeping our facilities safe and clean, to making sure a school has the supplies it needs, to feeding children or providing band-aids, or giving students confidence on a field, a stage, or in a classroom, your work makes excellence possible, and it deserves respect.

I want to take this moment to acknowledge what you do, and to offer my sincerest gratitude.

**Oral Communications:**

*Kelly Green, employee*, address the Board regarding the Willie Brown Act.

*Patricia Sanders, AEA President*, noted that in previous years, employees have been able to take full advantage of the Willie Brown Act, but this year, teachers are being denied. This doesn’t make sense. We need to work collaboratively on this to make things right for people who have made sacrifices for our students.

**Student Board Member Reports**

Student Board Members reviewed events and happenings at their respective school sites.

**Calendar Review:** President McMahon reviewed the calendar of events for Board Members.

**Closed Session Action Report:** There was no action taken in Closed Session.

**DONATIONS:** President McMahon thanked the community for their generous donations.

**Recognition of Student Board Members**

President McMahon noted the Board believes it is important to seek out and consider students' ideas, viewpoints and reactions to the educational program. In order to provide student input and involvement, the Board includes one student board member from each of the district's high schools. The duties of the student board member include providing continuing input for deliberations, strengthening communications between the Board and district students, and representing all students in discussing all sides of issues.

Student board members are selected by student leadership and site administrators in a method determined to best represent the interests of students at that high school site. This year's student board members are:

- Deanna Quach – Alameda High School
- Jennifer Ramos – ASTI
- Kelly Reed – Encinal High School
- Hearmon Kesete – Island High School

The Board wishes to recognize the student board members for their commitment and participation as their term in office ends. Student board members were presented with certificates of appreciation.

Member Mooney thanked the students for listening to the discussions and debates and providing input from a student point of view, and wished them luck in their future endeavors.

**Highlighting Alameda Unified School District Schools: Wood Middle School**

Jeanne Mellor, Vice President of Wood Middle School, introduced the student Service Learning Waste Reduction Project (SLWRP) Leaders who presented "A Year in Review" of their work with the Alameda County office of Education, Waste Management, and EarthTeam to share with the community about the valuable work being done at Wood to reduce waste in our landfills.

Jeanette Frechou, SLWRP Coordinator, introduced the student teams and shared highlights via DVD.

**Highlighting Alameda Unified School District Schools: Project Youth View Winner**

Donna Wyatt, Coordinator of ROP and Post Secondary Options, introduced the item. Since Project Youth View's inception in 2005, Alternatives in Action and the co-sponsor, Comcast, have showcased over 50 youth-created film shorts, highlighted the work of over 100 young filmmakers, and brought over 1,000 youth and adults together to experience and discuss the power of youth voice through film. This year, East Bay Regional occupational Program joined Alternatives in Action and Comcast as co-sponsors of this event held in the historic Alameda Theatre on Thursday, May 7, 2009. East Bay ROP students were able to showcase student work in the fields of digital animation and video game design as well as field an entry in the film shorts competition.

This year, nine film shorts were selected by a diverse panel of judges from submissions throughout Northern California. Audience members were asked to judge the films and chose Alameda High School's "The Urge" as the 2009 project Youth View Audience Choice award winner. "The Urge" was created by 11 seniors enrolled in the ROP TV Media 2 class taught by Mr. John Dalton. This was the first film short created by this team of students and each contributed their own unique style to the film. Every high school student can relate to the brief story told in this film.

Ms. Wyatt introduced Mr. Dalton and some of the student filmmakers, who shared their short film via DVD presentation.

### **Approval of Caring Schools Curriculum Addressing Issues of Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity**

Margie Sherratt, Substitute Assistant Superintendent, introduced the item. The goal of creating safe schools is to ensure that all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or the sexual orientation of their family members, feel safe in our schools and that all students have equal access to a quality education. This work is in accordance with legal mandates AB 537 Student Safety & Violence Prevention Act of 200 and Board Policy 5145.3 Nondiscrimination/harassment, Ed Code Section 2000, and Penal Code Section 422.6(A). These laws and policies mandate that public schools prevent discrimination and harassment based on all legally protected categories.

In response to these issues, the District provided elementary staff training in October 2007 and created a Safe Schools team of teachers to address implementation of addressing inclusiveness, family diversity, and anti-bullying/anti-slurs in conjunction with the Caring Schools Community curriculum. In October 2008, secondary staff underwent training with the focus on refining current courses of study and providing focused support for Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) student organizations.

Staff recommends the Board approve Lesson 9 of the Caring Schools Community curriculum which addresses issues of inclusiveness specifically around lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and family diversity. This lesson is prevention-oriented, as it identifies name calling and teasing as a precursor to bullying.

Ms. Sherratt introduced Jane Lee, Principal of BayFarm Elementary School, who provided background information on her previous role as the District's Diversity Coordinator. Ms. Lee noted that the position was created in response to the community around diversity issues and some racial conflict taking place in the district. This work began in 1991, and "Team Diversity" was formed. Team Diversity was a group of concerned citizens, community members, parents, teachers, staff and administrators who met regularly to have conversations about what was going on within the city. In 1994, the group was charged with conducting an audit. The comprehensive audit included focus groups of all kinds of different stakeholders. As a result of the audit by an outside consulting group, there were five key areas identified if AUSD was to systemically address issues around diversity:

- Student/staff/community relations
- Curriculum
- Instructional practices
- Professional development
- Hiring practices

One of the recommendations was to have leadership for this momentum to move forward; this is how the Diversity Coordinator position was created in 1996. School sites used the Team Diversity work in their plannings and assessments and in developing their school site plans.

The district identified a racial academic achievement gap, worked on a lot of different professional development activities at various levels, and brought in different consultants to the Team Diversity monthly forums for discussions.

Unfortunately, in 2002, funding and budget challenges came into play and the Diversity Coordinator position was eliminated. Sustainability became more of a challenge and it was difficult for the work to continue after 10 years in existence.

Member Spencer asked how members of Team Diversity were selected and if they reflected the diversity of the community. Ms. Lee noted that anyone could attend Team Diversity meetings, and that Team Diversity itself was a volunteer group that represented a wide constituency.

Member Tam added he remembers participating in training as a teacher and an administrator and talking about being inclusive of other ethnicities and cultures. Team Diversity also partnered with the City of Alameda to go to a Museum of Tolerance and have discussions in regards to community forums, relating to what each person had learned through the experience. Alameda Police Department participated in the Tolerance Museum professional development training, as well.

Ms. Sherratt thanked Ms. Lee for providing Team Diversity background information. Ms. Sherratt again reviewed the training plan, summer/fall work, and the Caring Schools Community lessons 1-8 guidelines.

#### Recommendations:

- Adopt the K-5 lesson #9 as a supplement to the Caring Schools Community curriculum
- Develop an instructional support guide to Caring Schools Community to include all of the protected classes
- Develop and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Caring Schools Community curriculum including the LGBT #9 lesson to be administered to teachers at the end of the first trimester of 2009/2010 school year
- From this evaluation, make recommendations to the Board for possible 2010 revision
- Provide a site-based evening workshop in the Fall 2009 for parents on the state of California and AUSD harassment policies as well as zero tolerance for bullying

Representative speakers were selected from both sides of the issue and given the same amount of time to address the Board of Education. Those opposed to the LGBT curriculum spoke first.

*Sarah Kim, attorney and Alameda resident*, addressed the Board and noted she has a petition signed by 468 Alameda residents. She shared the petition with the Board, but collected it back for fear of retaliation against those who signed. Ms. Kim also provided an alternative resolution, and added that this curriculum would expose the schools to legal liability. Staff has refused to include an opt-out provision, but the state has that health education must provide an opt-out. The state defines health education as all lessons on “characteristics of families”, “various roles and responsibilities”, and “gender roles”. This curriculum falls within those definitions. The staff recommendation is inadequate. Let’s work together to create common ground.

*Aiesha Baldi, parent*, has 5 children, 4 of whom attend AUSD schools. Ms. Baldi is a Muslim and co-founder of the Islamic Center. Ms. Baldi shared an issue that a young Muslim girl experienced harassment when trying to wear her head scarf to school. She was made fun of by other students, and as the school year progressed, she began to wear her head scarf less and less and now does not wear the hijab to school at all. Muslim children also experience bullying during Ramadan fasting, when they are forced to sit in the cafeteria during lunch and watch other students eat. This curriculum would highlight differences in beliefs. The Board needs to adopt something that will respect the differences. Muslim children have equal rights to be protected. Instead of curriculum that excludes us, vote for K-12 common ground. Parents need to have a say about what children are taught about homosexuality.

*Deon Evans, Senior Pastor and parent*, urged the Board to vote against adopting this curriculum. 70% of the speakers who addressed the Board are opposed to the curriculum. Those who vote against it aren’t prejudiced, but object to this highly controversial curriculum. This curriculum bullies all other protected classes. If a child cannot read well and is asked to read aloud in front of their peers, this is bullying. If a

teacher says aloud that a student has illegible writing and other children use it as playground fodder, this is bullying. Children are bullied most often because of race – double that of any other group. Shouldn't that affect your priorities? You are sending the wrong message to minority children struggling with these issues. You are saying that AUSD has given up on black children who are teased, bullied, and marginalized beyond the other protected group. Suicide is not the issue among elementary aged children in Alameda or even in Alameda County, and most of the suicides committed here are linked to mental illness and not bullying. The facts do not conclude that our schools need this LGBT curriculum, but on-site psychiatric help. No plantation politics. If this curriculum is adopted, there will be a strong reaction. Instead of bringing us together, it will cause suspicion and alienation and generate recall petitions.

A representative group in support of adopting the curriculum were provided with equal speaking time.

*Beth Komer, Alameda resident and teacher*, noted that California Ed Code requires that teachers provide a safe learning environment. This is one lesson among many designed to teach students how to work in a community atmosphere. The need is real. This year, a student in my class wrote a list of hot girls and gay boys on the bathroom wall. When the SRO and I questioned the student, it was obvious that the student knew the correct definition of the word "gay". The parents were shocked that the student had even heard of the word. The students named on the list were uncomfortable and distressed for several days. Incidences in elementary school have lifelong impacts on all of us.

Teachers deal with students all day and intervene in arguments on the playground, in the lunchtime, after class, etc. Bullying and respect need to be addressed. Our job as teachers and administrators is to make sure all students feel safe and supported. This curriculum was designed simply to support teachers and give them a common vocabulary and is age appropriate.

I am proud to work at a school named for a courageous 6 year-old girl. When Ruby Bridges visited our school, she told students that to her, they were all a bunch of M&M's – different colored shells on the outside, but the same sweet chocolate on the inside. When Ruby Bridges was in school, there were brave Caucasian families who stood with her. It is the responsibility of all of us to adopt and put into practice this curriculum that will help teachers and students work to overcome injustice in our society today.

*Victoria Forrester, former teacher with 22 years experience in AUSD*, noted that history repeats itself. Ms. Forrester taught for 16 years at Earhart 12 years ago, and allowed a discussion in class about the Ellen Degeneres "coming out" television show episode. One family objected, and parents asked for the revocation of her teaching credential because the word "gay" was used in the classroom. Currently, Ms. Forrester is the Principal of Roosevelt School in San Leandro, which already has the Safe Schools curriculum taught in every elementary school and writing curriculum in middle school. There is a clear difference in what students are learning. Ask the Roosevelt community about what this curriculum means to them. Make the decision to not let history repeat itself.

*Rob Bonta, parent and attorney*, noted that providing notification and an opt-out conflicts with the goal of the curriculum. Notification could be used as an opt-out provision for parents who will just keep their children at home when the curriculum is being taught. The lesson will not be learned, quite possibly by those who need it the most. Notification teaches children that LGBT issues are so problematic and dangerous that parents have to be notified before it can be taught. Notification is self-defeating in the case of anytime lessons and teachable moments, and is potentially discriminatory. There is no notice required when teachers talk about any other family constitution. By using sexual orientation as the basis, the district is open to legal exposure.

*Rebecca Holder, Alameda Multi-Cultural Center*, commended the district on the curriculum and supports strengthening it. More needs to be done to prevent bullying, that's what this is about. We should not block

a lesson plan that addresses the human right to safety. True diversity includes everyone; we can't say we're for diversity, except for this group or that group. This lesson plan is part of the change process better for everyone. It's not sex ed – it's violence prevention that creates a safe place without fear to be ourselves no matter what your race, ethnic background, gender, economics, etc.

The Native American value system is one of inclusion. All life is to be honored and respected. We are all connected and here to help each other. Let us care so deeply about the bullying of another that we jump at the opportunity to diminish the suffering of our LGBT students. We have a lot of work to do, but this is a starting point.

*David Gunderman, Alameda resident*, noted he feels strongly about religious and personal rights, but the playing field must be fair for all points of view. We need to co-exist. Anyone can hold any viewpoint, but institutionally, the district must enforce fairness for all and the care of all children. The playing field is not fair for LGBT issues. Heterosexual families exist everywhere in curriculum. Is notification required when discussing heterosexual family units? Why not? Can you opt out of learning about one group and not another? What message does that send? Does one point of view trump another? What about creationism vs evolution? This is not about morality, but reality. Religion is deeply personal, but when it's used to oppress, it must be checked.

*Brian Harris, student*, noted he is homosexual and shared his experience at ACLC. At first, there was no trouble from fellow learners. Then when the new group of students came in, the insults began. He was harassed by other students. This curriculum is necessary to stop other students from being tortured in the same way. Some members have said the curriculum gives special rights to LGBT people. If this is true, should we stop teaching about civil rights because it gives special rights to blacks? Stop teaching about the Holocaust because it gives special rights to Jews? Students have a right to know that LGBT people exist. We are not promoting a lifestyle – the curriculum is 45 minutes out of the school year. Please approve this much-needed curriculum.

Member Jensen asked Ms. Sherratt if districts were required to adopt anti-bullying curriculum. Ms. Sherratt noted yes, they are. Member Jensen asked if lesson #9 was the only lesson that specifically addresses one of the protected classes. Ms. Sherratt noted implicitly, but not explicitly. There are lessons in social studies and language arts that address and reference other cultures. Curriculum covers a wide variety of cultures within our community and our world. In middle school, they study European history, religions of the world, as well as Africa as a culture.

Member Mooney asked Ms. Sherratt to read the additional 2 definitions to the curriculum. Ms. Sherratt noted the definitions of bully and transgender were added:

*Bully – one who talks or acts in a mean-spirited way to another person*

*Transgender – a person whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth*

Member Spencer noted there have been a lot of people talking about their children getting bullied for all kinds of reasons, and now we're planning to introduce curriculum that proposed this contradictory data...if in fact those children express their religious belief in a classroom discussion, how will we know that they will be safe at our schools?

Superintendent Vital noted in professional development of teachers, there is an FAQ and Q&A script of what a teacher might say when addressing a specific question. Anything having to do with sex, the students are referred back to their families. In addition, students have their rights under free speech to respectfully disagree. Part of the training for teachers is to support all students in their classroom. We are

recommending evaluating the Caring Schools Curriculum to see if it is really working and if it meets our needs.

What teachers have is the Caring Schools Community box of tools, suggestions, and activities, applicable to many situations. We are recommending developing a supplemental guide to give further support to teachers in working through all of the protected classes. It is clear from the community dialogue that we need to do more for all groups.

Member Spencer reiterated that studies show our students are bullied most for racism, so why are we looking at specifically LGBT at this time? The law says we must provide safe schools for all of our students, but the lessons 1-8 do not specify any class. Lesson #9 specifically addresses LGBT, which is contrary to the spirit of the law. Why aren't teachers asking for help regarding race if it's reported by students to be the basis of harassment?

Ms. Sherratt noted part of the issue with LGBT is that it is more acceptable to use the term "gay" in a derogatory way than other terms associated with other protected classes. Superintendent Vital noted again, there will be a supplemental guide developed and professional development. Teachers asked for these tools, and we want to support them. In the evaluation piece, we need to be very clear on how we're measuring whether or not the curriculum is reducing bullying and teasing, etc.

Member Spencer added she had received correspondence from a mixed race family who objected to the "Who's in a Family" animal book portraying the mixed-race family as dogs. Why don't we use books with actual people in them in stead of animals?

Gail Rossiter, Principal of Franklin Elementary School, noted that in elementary school, students readily identify with animals and make an easy transition to applying that knowledge to people.

Member Spencer asked if other lessons would be created to address other specific protected classes before September. Superintendent Vital responded that the proposed supplemental guide would address other protected class, and the evaluation of the curriculum would look at whether or not its meeting our needs. The goal is not to develop more lessons. Caring Schools Curriculum is a framework curriculum that deals with protected classes implicitly rather than explicitly.

Gail Rossiter added one of the initial premises we're working under is that in none of our curriculum is gender identify and LGBT families seen, while other classes are. That is why we felt it was important to add it somewhere, and it seemed to be a good fit with Caring Schools Community. It is not to the exclusion of any other group.

Member Jensen noted there are LGBT teachers and staff in the district. If a student's religious beliefs make them uncomfortable in this situation, is the student allowed to transfer to another classroom? Laurie McLachlan-Fry, Chief Human Resources Officer, noted that there is no such policy and place.

Member Spencer encouraged staff to review San Francisco's anti-bullying, progressive discipline policy.

Member Jensen asked about parent notification. Superintendent Vital noted at the beginning of the year, the practice has been to share with families in school packets or back to school night or similar, which new materials will be used this year so families are clear about what's being taught when.

Member Tam suggested revising the Team Diversity findings and studies to review. Superintendent Vital agreed, adding that we need to look at how we take diversity issues of equity to action.

Member Mooney stated he is ready to support the Superintendent's recommendation, and read the K-5 vocabulary words. Member Mooney noted he doesn't find the vocabulary words objectionable at all, and would like to also look at the San Francisco curriculum. Perhaps it is one we would be interested in using in the future and expanding upon as we talk about implementation, evaluation, and assessment.

Member Spencer added we have an achievement gap with African American students, who are significantly farther behind than our other students. We do not have curriculum that specifically goes to reducing bullying for other protected classes. What message does that send? We have left our African American students behind, academically. Member Spencer noted concern about not offering direct curriculum to reduce bullying against other protected classes concurrently when we're being asked to implement this one. Member Mooney said he doesn't think not moving forward is the answer at this time.

Member Spencer asked about those students expressing a different opinion due to their religious beliefs. This will increase harassment against those already marginalized, and we are not being sensitive to their needs. Are we saying their beliefs are wrong? Religion is another protected group, and they need some level of protection when we're teaching something that is contrary to their beliefs. Member Mooney noted we can have our own beliefs, but they are to be discussed at home. This is not a moral issue. You can't exclude because you happen to have a religious belief against this group. The district is charged with protecting all students, and that includes LGBT students, regardless of whether or not other groups disagree with the lifestyle.

President McMahon noted as currently proposed, he cannot support the current recommendation. The issue right now, as proposed, is that the curriculum deals with a certain set of individuals when in fact, a curriculum guide is being proposed – a supplemental guide that constitutes curriculum that is not being approved as an overall package. President McMahon noted he is leery of relying on that process to take place in a balanced way, and cannot support the recommendation as put forth. Member McMahon added he is willing, in order to move the curriculum forward, adopting lesson #9 with an opt-out for 2009 only, upon which time evaluation would give us the opportunity to see what effect it has on the curriculum.

Member Tam noted the issue focuses on inclusiveness. We still have a long journey in regards to building an inclusive community. This work really began back in 1992 with Team Diversity addressing equity. Currently, we need to continue to have this dialogue. We need to begin somewhere. Staff took 2 years to look at what the charge was – create a lesson plan. We are talking about 1 lesson plan per grade level. Member Tam noted he would rather move forward, and encouraged the Superintendent to look at and evaluate and be really critical with regards to what we need to do differently and how we can be supportive.

Member Spencer stated without representing all classes, there should be an opt-out offered.

**MOTION: Member Jensen**

That the Board approve Caring Schools Curriculum Addressing Issues of Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity as proposed.

**SECONDED: Member Mooney**

**AYES:** Jensen, Mooney, Tam

**NOES:** McMahon, Spencer

**MOTION CARRIED**

Member Jensen read a prepared statement:

“This is the most divisive and contentious issue that I have faced during more than seven years as a school board member. Many of my friends, people who I have grown up with, and respected community members are on opposite sides of the debate. And all who have an opinion have a deep felt and profound need for closure. That is because we are facing a challenge as a society – a moral challenge similar to many challenges we have overcome in the past. As stated eloquently by Chai Feldblum, Georgetown Law School Professor and founder of the Moral Values Project, said “the challenge for us as a society is to ensure the full integration of gay people into society, while acknowledging the liberty of those who believe homosexuality is sinful.”

This curriculum is a small step towards doing that. We are not telling anyone what to think. We are letting children know that gay people exist and they deserve to be treated with respect, regardless of whether or not you believe that homosexuality is acceptable.

There are many deeply held and persuasive arguments against the curriculum, one being a certainty that sharing information about LGBT families will create an atmosphere of hostility towards students who do not believe that those families are acceptable. That children who are taught by their parents that homosexuality is not OK will be forced to argue against their beliefs because of these lessons. To that I suggest that in our District we teach a variety of subjects that may contradict other lessons students receive at home or elsewhere. For example, we teach children that guns in school are not OK, but that doesn't mean that children of parents who belong to the NRA are ostracized. We teach about evolution but we don't ridicule children who believe in creation.

Another argument is that the lessons are not necessary because bullying in our schools won't stop. Another way of saying that, to my mind, is to suggest that we should not do anything to make LGBT individuals or their children feel safe until we are certain that all other forms of bullying are eliminated. That leads us to the protected classes. Is it appropriate to adopt these lessons without including descriptive lessons about all protected classes?

Religion is one. What if a student wants to know whether the earth was created in a day? Or who was Genghis Khan? Or whether dinosaurs were allowed on Noah's Ark?

What about ethnicity? Students may ask why is there fighting on the West Bank? Or why no other children would go to school with Ruby Bridges? Or where is Taiwan?

Similarly, teachers may face questions from students about gender and disability stereotypes. What would a teacher say if a child asks why Hitler considered mentally retarded people to be expendable? Or why women are still not allowed to vote in some countries?

The answer is that teachers have information to share with students about all of those protected classes. Our classrooms have books about Marie Curie, Helen Keller, Ray Charles, Henry the 8th, and Adolph Hitler. Our schools celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Chinese New Year and Cinco de Mayo. And our teachers have lesson plans and projects to teach students about immigration, slavery, disabilities, religion and the struggles of diverse groups of people.

Since there is information available to students about all other protected class, then this is an issue of not talking about only one. Teachers can point to Martin Luther King Jr. when a white student makes a derogatory comment about a student with dark skin, but that teacher can't provide any explanation to Mary when she makes fun of Joey because he has 2 moms. Shall we give teachers books, lessons,

projects and other tools to answer students questions about religion, gender, disability and ethnicity, but have them tell students that questions about gender identity can only be answered by parents? I disagree.

I disagree. One of the roles of the teacher is to answer questions. This curriculum was developed to support teachers in answering some questions. To those who would prefer that teachers tell the student to go home and ask their parents what the answer to the question is I say that is not education. That is unacceptable.

Finally, I agree with those who oppose the curriculum when they say that it is their job to teach their children about VALUES. Children who come to public school have been informed by their parents and their families. They come to school to learn, and what they learn is that the world they live in now has been shaped by dynamic values over the course of history. As students take on the study of English, history, science and other subjects they will be learning about the values of others.

I support this curriculum precisely because it is NOT about values. I support these lessons because I believe that it IS the role of educators to give students tools to tolerate and respect those with values that are different from their own.

I began my comments with a quote and now I'll end with one. Earlier this month President Obama addressed the graduating class of Notre Dame, in an environment of hostility and separation similar to the one that has arisen over this issue in Alameda. In urging people to respect each others' values, President Obama said "For if there is one law that we can be most certain of, it is the law that binds people of all faiths and no faith together. It is no coincidence that it exists in Christianity and Judaism; in Islam and Hinduism; in Buddhism and humanism. It is, of course, the Golden Rule - the call to "treat one another as we wish to be treated."

That is all that we are attempting to do, to teach students the Golden Rule so that they can all feel safe and supported in our schools."

Member Tam noted that with Team Diversity, each school was asked to create a diversity plan. If there is still a copy around, we need to revisit these plans and see whether or not things have been implemented.

Member Jensen noted she appreciates some of the points brought up by Member Spencer and is concerned that discrimination of other classes may occur. We need to have more concrete requirements and should be collecting more specific information, like incident reports so we get a more accurate account of what actually happens at the sites.

With regard to the supplemental guide, Member Spencer asked how community members could provide input. Superintendent Vital noted that more information will be provided once staff gets to that point in the work. Member Spencer added it is important we reach out to those who expressed so much concern – they need to be included in the process. Superintendent Vital added that staff will follow-up.

### **Report on Governor's Budget May Revise for Fiscal Year 2009/2010**

Tim Rahill, Chief Financial Officer, introduced the item. Since the State Budget Propositions from the 5/19/09 State Election have failed, the State is now looking at the worst-case budget scenario from the Governor's May Revise. There are proposed major additional reductions to the budget for the current year (2008/09) and the following year (2009/10).

If approved by the state legislature and signed by the Governor, the may Revise could reduce ongoing funding to the Alameda Unified School District by \$2.2M in 2008/09 and another ongoing reduction of \$200K in 2009/10. These amounts are "ballpark" estimates and will change as the state takes action to

address the budget crisis. Additional information should be provided at the state budget workshop on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

As reported at previous school board meetings and public budget workshops, AUSD was already facing major funding reductions of over \$5M in ongoing state funds. Now, there may be an additional reduction of \$2.4M for a grand total loss over two years of \$7.4M.

Prior to the proposed May revise, the district has presented a multi-year strategy to address the funding reductions by utilizing reserves, Categorical Flexibility and the Measure H Parcel Tax. Categorical Flexibility allows a district to use special purpose funds for the general operations of the district. With the proposed additional reduction of funds, the district is reviewing its multi-year strategy and considering additional Categorical Flexibility and/or future year budget cuts. This will be presented to the school board at its meeting on 6/9/09.

Also at the 6/9/09 meeting, information on the AUSD 2009/10 budget will be presented. At the following meeting on 6/23/09, the Board will conduct a Public Hearing and take action on the AUSD 2009/10 budget.

Member Spencer asked if there are exit forms for families leaving the District. Carole Robie, Substitute Assistant Superintendent stated there are exit forms for all students, and we will reiterate with leadership that we want to make sure those are filled out and returned.

#### **Approval of Job Description – Web/Web Communications**

Ms. McLachlan-Fry noted this job description is the product of thinking for the future and is for the Board of Education's approval at this time.

This position, under the direction of the Director of Information and Technology Services, will design and maintain the District's website(s), ensuring the continual correctness, completeness, and timelines of information on the website. A current, well-maintained website will promote the effective use of internet and intranet communication tools to enhance communication between AUSD and its community of parents, teachers, and students.

Member Spencer asked what fund will cover the salary and what else could it be used for. Superintendent Vital explained that the funds are coming from a TIIG grant. We have shifted many general fund dollars outside of technology and put positions in TIGG> It's hard to say what else the funds could be used for – TIIG monies are flexible. Each year, we will need to review to see if we're making appropriate investments.

#### **MOTION: Member Mooney**

#### **SECONDED: Member Jensen**

That the Board approve the Job Description for Web/Web Communications as submitted.

**AYES:** Jensen, McMahon, Mooney, Spencer, Tam

**NOES:** None

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Board Member Reports**

Board Member Mooney thanked the Superintendent and staff for the May 20 Master Plan Workshop, and added that in future workshops, he would like to see more time for the Board to discuss the materials presented.

Member Jensen noted she attended the Rotary Luncheon where grants were distributed to the high school student newspapers, Cal-Safe Program, Close-Up, BASE, and many others. Member Jensen thanked the Superintendent for eliminating bottled water and using glasses and pitchers. Member Jensen thanked the Superintendent for her work on the LGBT process which started 2 years before she got to AUSD. Member Jensen noted appreciation for President McMahon's comments about opting out.

Member Tam noted he attended Washington and Haight school open houses and enjoyed the musical performances. Both schools had a good turnout.

Member Spencer attended Wood, Spring Fling, BTSA, and the EHS Awards. Member Spencer noted she is personally very concerned about the institutional racism and disenfranchisement of underrepresented and marginalized students and community members we have heard from. There needs to be a lot of work done to reach out to them so these groups don't get left behind.

President McMahon added the ROP programs received a donation from the Greater Alameda Business Association. With regards to the LGBT curriculum, President McMahon noted since the vote has been taken in support of, he will support the direction of the Board to make the implementation as smooth as possible.

Member Jensen thanked President McMahon for his facilitation of the meetings with hours and hours of public testimony regarding this issue.

### **Adjournment**

President McMahon adjourned the meeting at 10:04 PM.