

**ADOPTED MINUTES**

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

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**- The meeting was called to order by President McMahon at 6:34 PM, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

**ABSENT:** None

**PUBLIC SESSION ITEM**

**Master Plan Topics:** *Final Public Education Volunteers Report; Parcel Tax; Maximizing Fundraising Efforts, including Grant Systems and Collaboration with Community Partnerships*

***Public Education Volunteers Report***

**Charles Weiland:**

- Highlights – need to increase media/alumni relations and market what’s happening in Alameda Schools; “Alameda should be the destination for education”.
- Magnet schools – support as listed in documents
- Add full-day Kindergarten; parents are not choosing Alameda public schools because the Kindergarten day is too short. They prefer to have the Kindergarten day in sync with grades 1-5 as paying for extra daycare is a financial burden
- Longer recesses so kids are in school from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM for working parents or single parent households
- Sports academy as a magnet – there is lots of interest
- Arts magnet – there is no arts taught in traditional schools
- Otis community – difficult to give up Otis and neighborhood school at the elementary level. Parents would be more likely to participate in a secondary magnet school
- Revenue ideas – support for interdistrict students. Seek funds from corporations and foundations. District should hire someone to write grants and another position to solicit corporations and media coverage
- Cuts – furlough days – ridiculous for teachers
- Parcel tax – unanimously would support a replacement tax and 100% support for doubling the amount to \$650 up to \$1K

**Zoe Holder:**

- Do not close EHS. If one big high school, less opportunities for students to be involved in sports, music, and other specialized programs. Neighborhood high schools should be valued, too
- Divide EHS into academies – support, but all parents want to make sure their children can get enrolled. ELL parents expressed concern about their students being left out
- If AHS is the one high school, how would APC kids get there?

- How will merging affect the teachers?
- One parent suggested one high school would result in better AP classes and programs for all students
- Why not propose to close AHS? EHS has more room to grow
- EHS and CMS students – most have younger siblings they walk to school – Ruby Bridges or Chipman. What happens at EHS affects the other surrounding schools, too
- DELAC – don't cut ELD teachers or classes
- No increase in class size as increase will only widen the equity gap. Larger class sizes are a hindrance in teaching the whole child and an additional burden on teachers
- What will happen to the quality of education if class sizes increase?
- Enrollment anxiety with magnets and charters – will everyone get accepted? What if don't get in or don't want to go to the Chipman charter? Then what?
- What about new students coming in mid-year?
- West End is consistently and unfairly subjected to more cuts. West End schools and students are undervalued. Why are we targeted again? What will be done to address the equity gap?
- The belief is the district caves into more affluent parents at other schools

### *Questions/Answers*

Q: Who is suing over parcel taxes so we can boycott those businesses?

A: Mr. Borikas and Mr. Beery are the 2 litigants in the lawsuit against the district. One is a business owner and one is not.

Q: Will a 2/3 vote be required for a new parcel tax?

A: Yes, if we reach a settlement agreement, then it would have to go back to the citizens.

Q: Why can't you turn Alameda High into a charter school? There are wealthier students there.

A: These are the suggestions that are part of these community meetings; we are not at a point yet to make any recommendations. The Facilities Master Plan will help in really understanding the inventory of space to look at the possibilities of what could happen if we don't pass a parcel tax.

Q: What would it look like if the state took over?

A: That doesn't happen as easily as it used to. The County intervenes and would come and sit with us to make sure we made necessary cuts. The state doesn't have the same level of bail out money, so we would be forced to make cuts.

Q: What does Race to the Top mean for our district?

A: We are tracking Race to the Top, but we believe it will only be available to very large urban districts. We just don't have enough of the details, yet.

Q: Is there a way to lure the homeschooling group back?

A: This is all part of the suggested marketing campaign. This is a small group – about 40 students.

Q: Who pays for the maintenance of Thompson Field?

A: We will ask facilities.

Q: If there is an increase in class size, how are special ed student affected?

A: Special ed is very different. By law, we have to provide for whatever is in their IEP's.

Q: Would it be feasible to have one high school at EHS instead of AHS?

A: This is part of the FMP study. They're finishing that analysis right now. We understand that of all

the suggestions, this is the “nuclear” option. Obviously, that’s not the road we want to head down. But if we’re looking at \$16M in cuts, how can we do it?

- Q: What kind of parcel tax are we talking about if we’re trying to raise \$16M? We need to show people what they’re really getting for their money.
- A: The Parcel Tax Advisory Group is running scenarios and dollar amounts. We will put the notes on the website so you can provide feedback. It will take all of us to pass a parcel tax.
- Q: What about after school? At Lum, there are families paying \$700 to a company that is not part of AUSD, and many families who can’t afford that. Why doesn’t AUSD provide the programs and keep that revenue in-house?
- A: This is something to look at.
- Q: Whichever scenario is chosen, you will be increasing the student ratio. Can EHS and AHS students really fit on one campus? Where will the prep periods for the teachers go? What about AP classes, AVID, and the JROTC program?
- A: Again, the FMP analysis will help us look at all these scenarios and determine what is or isn’t possible. Some of these scenarios are ways to get to \$16M if we had to, but are not what’s educationally sound or good for kids.
- Q: What about a parking meter fee for the schools?
- A: This would have to come from the City, but it is something we can add to our list of things to discuss.
- Q: Why does Chipman continue to be part of the scenarios?
- A: We did a whole workshop around just Chipman and charter scenarios. Chipman is in year 4 program improvement. The district needed to start making a plan with Chipman and last year, we began conversations. A charter conversion is a way to restructure. Since then, Chipman has submitted a start-up charter application to the Board. The Board will need to act on that application on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Beyond that, we need to figure out what that means for Chipman as a middle school and its impact in the district. This is something we have to address.
- Q: Yet again, we are talking about more cuts that students will have to suffer. We already have old, bad books and musical instruments in need of repair.
- A: The School Site Council and Principal decide on the school budget and how it is spent.
- Q: What is the timeline for the Master Plan?
- A: On December 8, the Superintendent will present a new DRAFT based on all feedback we’ve heard. We will hear even more feedback, and present another DRAFT on January 12<sup>th</sup>, then the final at the end of January for the Board to make decisions.

### ***Comments***

- Krusi Park wasn’t on the list of parks but should be added.
- Teachers already do so much that is not covered by the district – how can we expect them to make due with even less? There will be more students falling through the cracks.
- This is an opportunity to rework school boundaries.
- Prefer we strengthen the foundation of our traditional public schools and not go magnet, academy, or charter.
- We’ve heard this 3 times. Has it come down to the bean counters? It’s clear where the district is going when 2 of the 3 scenarios suggest closing EHS. This is a social justice issue. Why are you putting the

burden on the lower socio-economic group? Your motto is “do more with less” every year.

- We are abandoning our young, dynamic teachers and betraying community trust. There are 16 people in this district who make \$100K or more – I don’t see any vision coming from them. What about an electric meter tax, volunteer contribution, district charter options? Enforce the attendance zones. We are at a crisis level. Maybe it’s not such a bad thing if we’re taking over since it seems you’re all out of ideas.
- Prisons get more many then school districts!
- There are a lot of students and parents here who obviously don’t want EHS to close. Nobody wants to lose a school, but what is your solution if we can’t raise \$16M? One of the obvious solutions is to close schools with the fewest number of kids attending. This isn’t an “us vs. them” situation. We don’t have enough money to keep the status quo unless we pass a parcel tax. If that doesn’t happen, what alternative solutions are you suggesting? What are you willing to give up?
- It would be great to have this kind of spirited participation when it comes time to pass a parcel tax!
- We understand these scenarios are upsetting; however, please understand these are not recommendations or written in stone. I can tell you the Superintendent is very supportive of EHS. As a booster member, I have seen her at many events. Don’t get it in your mind that she’s only listening to the wealthier East End contingent.
- Everything in the West End is being wiped away. You’ve already closed Longfellow, Woodstock, and Miller, now Chipman is going Charter and you’re talking about closing Encinal. Please leave us alone – you’re eradicating our history!

### ***Board Discussion***

- The problem is that we don’t have enough money. Can we all get behind a parcel tax and raise enough money so we don’t have to close schools or raise class sizes? That’s what we have to do. We also need to recognize we are in the middle of a recession. What is the possibility of us floating another parcel tax?
- We’ve heard a lot of suggestions. We need to talk about equity. If in fact we find ourselves in the position to close schools, who can most bear the burden of transporting their students across town? Right now when we talk about closing schools, we’ve been focusing at the secondary level. We have a lot of very small elementary school, too.
- This is our 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Who comes to the most meetings and who do we hear from the most? Yes, it is the East End parents. West End – please get more involved! We have to see this kind of participation at every meeting. To the East End – if we have to close a school, are you willing to close yours and drive your student across town to attend another school? In reality, if you don’t have a car or funds for transportation, how will the APC students get to AHS? They would have to start walking at 6:00 AM; how will that affect their education? When push comes to shove, if we don’t pass this parcel tax, we will be asking the East End parents to step up.
- Everybody in this room can’t pass a parcel tax; even twice as many of us can’t do it. It’s going to take a huge effort. We need to frame this – what do we want our schools to look like in the future? What kind of education is our community willing to support?
- Whether AHS or EHS, we’ve got to talk about changes and making sure that programs that help attract existing families remain.
- Even the President and the Education Secretary support charter school. The Board has very limited ability to disapprove a charter application. Our decision CANNOT be based on the financial impact to the district, by law.
- Someone commented there is no leadership in this district. I strongly disagree. The Superintendent hit the ground running and looks at our schools to make sure there is real learning going on in every single classroom. Scenarios are not recommendations, but just “what if” scenarios. We started this process way back in March – where you were then? We’ve been talking about this all year long, yet

people don't show up until they incorrectly interpret a "what if" scenario as a proposal. You need to be involved in the whole process.

- One of our earliest workshops did an analysis of a charter district. Financially, this isn't feasible and based on the size of our district, we couldn't legally do it. We've looked at a lot of things since March and everything is posted on the website under Master Plan.
- It would be great if we could get more community members into schools to see what's actually happening. We need to implement an aggressive marketing plan to really show people what great things are happening in all of our schools.
- In order to get a parcel tax on the June ballot, we'd have to make a decision in February. That's not a whole lot of time. Please, keep coming to our meetings and providing suggestions. Check the website for past presentations and notes of meetings you may have missed to get up-to-speed on what we've been working on this year.
- This is something we go through every single year – what will save the most money and cause the least pain? There has been talk of one high school for 20+ plus. I might be supportive if we had the land and money to build a new high school, but that's not going to happen. The reality is there are challenges with every situation.
- Please visit the website and complete the online survey to provide more feedback about specific issues.
- We really do need to think about innovative programs to attract students and make the whole island more equitable.
- Bottom line, we need to look at our core values and why we're here. We have to provide the best education for our students and need to keep this in mind as we begin to make these difficult decisions.
- This is an adult problem. Which adults are willing to make sacrifices to keep the system afloat? We could always just lower everyone's salary by 10% and the problem would go away.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

President McMahon adjourned the meeting at 9:08 PM.