

McFARLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 15, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the McFarland Unified School District Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, November 15, 2011, at the McFarland High School Multipurpose Room. The meeting was called to order by Board Vice President at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL	Kaye Breyer, Vice President Jim Beltran, Member Marlin Isaacs, President Rey DeLeon, Member		
Absent:	David Arguello, Clerk		
Student Board Member:	Erika Garza		
Absent:	Khlarissa Agee		
Staff Present:	Gabriel McCurtis Ty Bryson Smith Efada Quentin Panek Teresa Arvizu Cynthia Arismendez Numerous others	Irene Melendez David Lopez Louie Gomez Javier Ruiz Yesenia Galvez Valerie Garcia	Kim McManaman Sandra Espinoza Maggie Gore Raul Murrieta Eric Garcia Albert Melendez
Community Present:	Chris Breyer Joaquin Ramirez Numerous others	Grant Herndon Maria Cabrera	John Almond

Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Oath of Office – Student Board Member – Erika Garza

Pledge of Allegiance – Rey DeLeon

Invocation – Chris Breyer

Presentation

A. Student Reclassification – 102 3rd-5th grade students were recognized and received certificates

Public Communication

Maria Cabrera had concerns with regards to the Special Education Program being moved.

Joaquin Ramirez also had concerns regarding the Special Education Program being moved.

Heather Millikin addressed the board with safety concerns regarding her son at Browning Road School.

Closed Session

The board adjourned to Closed Session at 4:38 p.m.

Open Session

The board re-convened to Open Session at 5:30 p.m.

Report of Closed Session

A. Public Employee Discipline, Dismissal/Release

During Closed Session the Board considered a Discipline Agreement for a classified employee. Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Kaye Breyer for approval of the discipline agreement for a classified employee. The discipline agreement was approved by a unanimous vote. The employee will serve a three-day suspension without pay and will be placed in a performance improvement plan.

B. No Action

C. No Action

D. No Action

E. Student Expulsion/Readmittance:

1. Student #1112-02 – MHS – Motion made by Jim Beltran, seconded by Rey DeLeon to Expel Student #1112-02 for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with stipulations. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

2. Student #1112-03 – SJHS – Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to Expel Student # 1112-03 for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with stipulations. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

3. Student #1112-04 – SJHS – Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to Expel Student #1112-04 for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with stipulations. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

4. Student #1112-05 – SJHS – Motion made by Jim Beltran, seconded by Rey DeLeon to Expel Student #1112-05 for the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year with stipulations. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

Action Items

A. Revision and Agenda Approval of Agenda of November 15, 2011.

Motion made by Jim Beltran, seconded by Kaye Breyer to approve the Agenda of November 15, 2011. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

B. Approval of Minutes of October 11, 2011 (Regular Meeting).

Motion made by Jim Beltran, seconded by Kaye Breyer to approve the minutes of October 11, 2011 (Regular Meeting). Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Warrant Registers
2. Approval of Interdistrict Agreements – 2011-2012
3. Approval of Contract- Kern Assistive Technology Center
4. Approval of School Plans – BR, KA, MMS & MHS
5. Approval of Alternative Governance Plans – BR, KA & MMS
6. Approval of Consultant Agreement (Interim MOT Director)-KCSOS
7. Approval of Parents to attend the Bakersfield/Kern County Region II CAFE Conference on Saturday, November 19, 2011
8. Approval of ASES (After School Education and Safety) Program Plan

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran for approval of the Consent Agenda items as presented. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

Information and Proposals

Community Input

Lorena Cordova addressed the board regarding the Tiger Grant.

Maria Figueroa addressed the board regarding concerns at Kern Avenue School.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent McCurtis addressed the Board.

1. Superintendent McCurtis asked Assistant Superintendent Kim McManaman to give a brief report on the Newsletter regarding Student Achievement. Sandra Espinoza spoke regarding the CA Standards Results/tests. Teresa Arvizu addressed the board regarding the EL Program Reclassifications. Supt. McCurtis asked each site principal to give a brief report regarding the AYP/API scores and how they did at their site and how they are keeping the momentum going. Smith Efada KA principal stated they are analyzing data having teacher PLC's and making sure students understand the material with an emphasis on complete sentences. Kim McManaman gave the Browning Road School report as Mrs. Salgado was not present. She stated they had a walk-thru and they were very impressed with the teachings going on in each classroom. Louie Gomez MMS Principal stated he and Mr. McCurtis worked on Benchmark review today and in regards to the scores they are implementing: checking for understanding, objectives, awareness campaign, assuring that the teachers/students/staff understand the benchmarks, PLC's discussing Data, celebrating student successes and benchmark celebrations. Ty Bryson stated the high school staff is working with QES consultants and looking at assessment Data, better understanding and a focus on Standards teaching. They are coming together on strategies and needs with much collaboration going on.

Supt. McCurtis added that the SRO and YSO officers are now in place with Officer Chisholm doing K-8 and Officer Lynch at MHS. The sites have been secured with new fencing now in place.

Attendance

Superintendent McCurtis stated that the monthly total for month 1 was at 3285 with the previous month at 3309 and one year ago there were 3308 students.

Student Board Member

Student board member Erika Garza reported that the Cross Country team is doing exceptionally well with the Varsity boys and girls winning the "Adidas Classic" meet in Oregon. The girls won CIF Valley Division 4 race with the boys receiving 2nd place in the CIF Valley Division 3 race. Volleyball has ended and they had a good year. Basketball will begin on November 21st with an Alumni game at 5:00 p.m. On November 28th they will have their first game against Taft at 5:00p.m.

Board Member Reports

Rey DeLeon – None

Kaye Breyer – She was very excited about the EL student's reclassifications. She appreciates all the work Teresa Arvizu and the teachers have done to make it happen.

Jim Beltran – Congrats to Mr. Efada and staff regarding the Carnival held at K.A. Regarding Back to School night he visited many classrooms and was pleased to see many parents attending.

Marlin Isaacs – None

Reports

1. MTA – None
2. CSEA – None

Presentation

1. Isom Advisors – Greg Isom gave a brief presentation regarding the Bond and all that it entails in regards to the district.
2. FFA Students and Mr. Murrieta gave a brief presentation regarding the activities from Aug/Sept and October for the students. Some of the activities included: Chapter Officer Retreat in Santa Maria, Dodger Game, COLC (Chapter Officers Leadership Conference), and the County Fair as well as how they did regarding the animals. Mr. Murrieta also mentioned that the renovations at the School Farm are progressing very well and things are looking great. They just planted oats in the cleared area.

Discussion (possible action)

1. Receive Information from 2010 Census and Discussion Regarding Possible Alternative Election System.

Grant Herndon of Schools Legal Service gave a presentation on updated demographics for the District, including information from the 2010 Census.

Mr. Herndon noted that the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution No. 1011-01 on June 15, 2010, calling for the development of trustee areas using 2010 Census data when it becomes available, and after holding one or more public hearings to obtain additional public input on any proposals. He distributed demographics information from the 2010 Census and other sources for voter registration and participation data

Mr. Herndon noted that the total population in the District increased from 10,827 in 2000 to 13,564 in 2010. Hispanic residents were the largest minority group within the District, accounting for 82 percent of total population in 2000 and 89.7 percent in 2010. Residents identifying themselves as “Non-Hispanic White” accounted for 7.3 percent of total population, and Black/African-American residents accounted for 1.3 percent of total population. Hispanic voting age population was 86.8 percent of the District total in 2010. Hispanic citizen voting age population increased from 66.7 percent in 2000 to 72.7 – 73.8 percent in 2010 according to the American Community Survey and Census Special Tabulation.

Mr. Herndon noted that data indicates an increase in Hispanic electoral participation. Registration data indicated 70.7 percent of registered voters in the District were Hispanic in 2000, in comparison with 79.2 percent in 2010, and voter turnout data showed 68.9 percent Hispanic in 2008 versus 70.7 percent in 2010.

Mr. Herndon indicated that the District has a strong history of Hispanic representation on the Board of Trustees. A review of contested elections from 1994 to 2008 showed that for 23 vacant seats, there were 37 Hispanic candidates, 15 of whom were elected to the Board. Three members of the current Board of Trustees are Hispanic and two are Caucasian (non-Hispanic).

Mr. Herndon reviewed some potentially relevant advantages and disadvantages of the current at-large system versus a “by-trustee area” election system:

1. A trustee's representation in an at-large system is not confined to just his/her trustee area, so that all trustees must consider the good of the entire district. On the other hand, if a district is very large, it may be difficult for trustees and candidates to get to know their district-wide constituencies. It can also be more expensive and time-consuming for candidates to campaign.
2. With a "by-trustee area" system, voters may feel more connected because their geographical area has its "own" representative that they alone elected. However, there may be a tendency to give priority to issues impacting only a trustee's particular trustee area or the schools located within it. If Board members focus only on the constituencies who elect them, this can preclude a broader policy perspective and interfere with a willingness to cooperate to achieve common goals, which can impact student achievement. This can also impact Board cohesiveness and productivity in general.
3. An at-large system allows for a larger candidate pool, allowing voters to choose (or the Board in the case of a vacancy) from a broader base of candidates and to support candidates from outside the immediate area where they live.
4. The Board of Trustees is already broadly representative of various school district communities of interest including racial and ethnic minorities.
5. In an at-large system, each voter has an equal influence in elections and can vote for any of the candidates running. In a by-trustee area system, the influence of voters may vary depending on the number of registered voters within a trustee area. Trustee areas with smaller numbers of registered voters will result in each voter having more influence than in areas with higher voter registration rates.
6. Given the demographics of the District and its electoral history, a strong case can be made that Hispanic voters have more than sufficient voting strength in the District to elect their candidates of choice. However, an at-large system can still be subject to a claim under the California Voting Rights Act.
7. In a single-member by-trustee area system, voters get to vote on Board candidates only once every four years, since they only vote for candidates running in the trustee area where the voter resides. In an at-large system, voters are voting for Board candidates every two years, regardless of where they live.
8. Where minority groups are under-represented on the Board, "by-trustee area" elections MAY provide more opportunities for minorities to elect representatives of their choice. However, the system may also result in discouraging qualified candidates who might draw support from all areas of the District but who do not have a constituency within their particular trustee area.

Mr. Herndon noted that it is possible that Hispanic influence District-wide could be reduced in an alternative election system by concentrating voting power in trustee areas in a greater percentage than District-wide. However, given that the population of the District is overwhelmingly Hispanic both in terms of total population and citizen voting age population, and considering its election history, a strong case can be made that Hispanic voters have more than sufficient voting strength in the District to elect their candidates of choice.

The trustees noted that no public concerns have been expressed in the recent past alleging that the at-large electoral system is in any way unfair. Superintendent McCurtis noted that no demand letters seeking a change in the electoral system have been filed with his office.

The Board further discussed the pros and cons of a change in election system. Mr. Herndon asked the trustees whether they felt that the size of the District could present an obstacle in running for the Board. Trustee Beltran commented that the size of the District would not present an obstacle in running for the Board. Trustee Breyer indicated it is possible to campaign door-to-door in the District.

Trustee Isaacs commented that having a larger voter pool in the at-large system is important. By dividing into smaller election areas, the District may have difficulty fielding candidates from some areas. Trustee Breyer felt that the fact that voters may wield different relative influence in a by-trustee area system depending upon the concentration of registered voters in a particular trustee area was a disadvantage to that system.

In light of the information presented, the trustees noted that it was not clear to them that a change in electoral system would be beneficial to the District at this time, or would significantly increase the voting strength of minority voters in the District. Hispanic voters seem to be able to make their choices for school board members.

By consensus, the Board members expressed that their preferred approach would be to maintain the current at-large election system for now, while continuing to watch for changes in District demographics and other factors which might make a by-trustee area election system more beneficial for the District and its students. Superintendent McCurtis asked Mr. Herndon to bring back a resolution expressing the Board's intention to hold off on changing election systems for now pending further developments and that a public hearing be set for public comment on the issue.

No Action taken.

Old Business

A. None

New Business

A. Personnel Register

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to approve the Personnel Register as presented. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

B. Approval of Revision of the McFarland Unified School District English Learner Master Plan

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to approve the Revision of the McFarland Unified School District English Learner Master Plan. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

C. Approval of Agreement between McFarland Unified School District and the following Supplemental Educational Service/Providers: Arriba Education & Learning Ladders, Inc.

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Kaye Breyer to approve the Agreement between McFarland Unified School District and the following Supplemental Educational Service/Providers: Arriba Education & Learning Ladders, Inc. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

D. Approval to Utilize a Piggyback Contract with A-Z Bus Sales, Inc. to Purchase a School Bus

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to approve to Utilize a Piggyback Contract with A-Z Bus Sales, Inc. to Purchase a School Bus. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

Advance Planning

Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to approve to next Regular board meeting date of December 13, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. at MHS Multipurpose Room. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

Adjournment

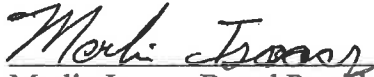
Motion made by Rey DeLeon, seconded by Jim Beltran to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

Board President adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Gabriel McCurtis, Secretary to the Board



Marlin Isaacs, Board President



Kaye Breyer, Vice President

Absent

David Arguello, Clerk

Rey DeLeon, Member



Jim Beltran, Member