



FONTANA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Educational Services
Categorical Programs

Superintendent's Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2005

I. Welcome and Introductions

Cali Olsen, Director Categorical Programs, thanked everyone for attending. She introduced Board Members, Dr. Wayne Ruble and Laura Mancha. She introduced Fontana Unified School District administrators that support the district, Dr. Richard Stedry, Deputy Superintendent Business Services; Dr. Patty Peoples, Associate Superintendent Administrative Services; Yolanda Mendoza, Associate Superintendent Human Resources; Steve Desist, Assistant Superintendent; Gail Grant, Assistant Superintendent and Katy Schneider, Area Administrator. Parents were thanked for attending the meeting and recognized by asking them to stand, and then principals were recognized. Superintendent, Dr. Charles Milligan was introduced.

II. Purpose – Dr. Charles Milligan

Dr. Milligan welcomed everyone to the first Parents – Superintendent's Advisory Council. The meetings will be held monthly. All schools are asked to have a PTA/Parent representative, a School Site Council representative and an English Learners representative. The meeting will provide parents a forum in which to communicate and forge ahead and make Fontana Unified the best district in the State. He was happy to let everyone know that the district had been removed from the State's "District Watch List" for program improvement. His goal is for students to do better and provide the best education to your children.

Board of Education members will rotate attendance. The Council will provide the opportunity to develop a relationship together, to form a partnership. He will listen to their concerns. He wants to see students' achievement increase by 40%. Fontana Unified needs to build schools, bring the budget in-line and compensate employees appropriately and assist principals in analyzing data.

Parents are their children's first teacher and the most valuable portion of the school community. The Council members are representative of 120,000 school community members. They are also representatives for the Board of Education at their school site. Principals are invited to attend as they need to know what the Superintendent is telling parents.

Parents have more power than they are exercising. Parents will be trained and feel comfortable talking to the Superintendent. The Superintendent works for and serves the Board of Education. Parents elect the Board and he is the parents' avenue to the Board. The Advisory Council members have leadership responsibility. Every move the district makes will be made through this group of parents. That is why the Board of Education members are invited to attend the meeting so that they hear what parents are saying.

What would you think if you were just told that the next school year would start three weeks early, the first part of August? Dropping this on you this morning is an example of the way not to do business. He asked parents to tell him what problems they would have with this. He had heard from parents in his last district about the quality of food, so he invited the food services department to provide parents with samples of the menu. He had also heard that transportation needed improvement so the director of transportation answered questions for the parents.

Budgets will also be reviewed with the parents so that they are aware of where the money is spent. District Goals will also be reviewed with the parents.

He re-introduced the Cabinet members who support the schools and share responsibility of the district with him. Laurie St. Gean, Deputy Superintendent Educational Services, was unable to attend since she was assisting the California Department of Education with a Western Association of Schools and Colleges High School (WASC) Review in northern California. Yolanda Mendoza, Associate Superintendent, Certificated Human Resources. She staffs the schools with teachers, gets substitute teachers and works with the calendar committee. She is part of the negotiating team, works with the bargaining units and is the compliance officer.

Parents can ask any questions they want to ask. It doesn't matter what it is. He doesn't have any secrets and won't mess with words and he'll tell you what he told the Board. The Board accepts or rejects what he tells them and then he'll tell the parents. He wants the parents to have an overview of the day-to-day operation of the district. He wants to empower parents in the district so that we can fix it together.

III. Budgets

Dr. Milligan will see that parents are provided the good and bad news about the budget. It is anticipated we will have a balanced budget. In mid-April or May there may be a better idea of what the budget will be. Fontana receives about \$400 million. He explained that he sees a lot of negotiation to be done with the legislation. As long as the district grows we are more impacted and crowded. We need more schools built now. Vendors want to tap into our funds. They always want to sell the district products. A trial communication system approved by the Board just yesterday was tested when a weapon was found at a High School. A child saw a gun and called Mom. Mom called school police and they recovered the weapon, everyone was safe. The parents received a message from the principal letting them know the problem was solved. Within four minutes 2,500 parents were notified and it can be used for attendance.

IV. Goals

The Parents need to know what's going on. He can't contact 40,000 families so it's his goal to tell you what he's going to do and if he doesn't do a good job and follow through parents need to tell him. He wants the best, nothing mediocre. The district has tons of challenges but nobody is going to tell him he can't do it. Some problems take a little longer to solve. The district will have five goals, one of which is student achievement. Others may be books, busses, buildings and or attendance. Average Daily Attendance has to improve; facilities must be built right, quickly and efficiently. The goals will become the marching orders for the district. They will be board approved. The goals will be written in terms of students, not for the Superintendent or the Board. Every single person in the district must show growth in the goals. We have to provide support to the sites to reach their goals.

Mr. Riordan, Secretary for Education addressed the district administrators on March 4th. He shared his California Local Education Accountability Reform Program (CLEAR). All sites in the district would have to participate. They would have control of their funds to do what they need to increase student achievement.

V. Bylaws

Parents were asked to review the bylaws before the next meeting. They can be adopted or changed. Robert's Rules of Order will be used to provide norms of behavior to operate the council. There will be officers of the Parent/Superintendent Advisory Council. They will set the agenda or contact him to put things on the agenda.

VI. Calendar

Yolanda Mendoza thanked everyone for coming. She has been with the district for six months and has worked with certificated, classified personnel, principals and assistant principals on the calendar. She shared two calendars. One calendar had the legend of the schools and the other had the holidays listed. She explained that the calendar had not been changed except that the start date is different because of the way the Fourth of July holiday falls. After the Christmas holiday, students will return on January 3rd since New Year's Day falls on a Sunday.

Dr. Milligan gave parents the job of passing the word to other parents and bringing back questions about moving the start date for the 2006-2007 school year. For instance, how do you have a vacation if elementary, middle and high schools are never off at the same time?

VII. *Questions - Comments*

Will the officers' terms end at the school year and be re-elected for the new school year?

Nothing is set in stone. He needs parents input.

Will we still have a separate District Advisory Committee?

This Council will serve the same purpose; not take away anything from the former committee but be more functional.

English Learners are on the rise, what are the district plans?

The district must better serve the English Learners needs. Watch what we are doing in terms of identifying students and different ways of introducing programs. There is a cultural part of our community of non-acceptance of English Learners educational needs and staff development will be provided so that no one can stick their heads in the sand.

English Learners are not the only group of students with problems. Other student groups need help. He has to make sure all students are learning.

When will all schools go single track?

As we build elementary schools and shift their populations around the schools will move back to single track calendars. As we build another school in the Southridge area, the district will reconvert Jurupa Hills Middle School to an elementary school.

Will the kindergarten class ratio ever drop to 20:1?

As long as we have facility shortage problem, it won't change. Teachers rotate every few weeks in multi-track schools and it's not a good way for students to learn. We would have to have more classrooms.

When will we have a preschool at every one of our schools?

Special funds from the state pay for our preschools at this time. Budgetary considerations are what prevent opening other preschool classes as they would impact the budget and K-12 funds would be spread thinner. Grant funds come and go. When the grant ends the programs usually stay and general funds are used which is not a good situation.

When will Primrose Elementary be renovated and have enough electrical support?

Primrose is eligible to apply for modernization. When the money is received, the job goes out to bid. They have to pick the lowest bidder unless you have a very specific reason to protest. Vendors raise their fees.

Can't a teacher be added to each school and lower class size?

With 27 elementary schools multiplies by \$60,000 for a teacher's salary, 1.7 million in additional funds would be expended that the district doesn't have. The district is overstaffed by 40 teachers. Yet students are still overflowed to other schools. That's horrible to do to students. The state puts us in a 20:1 ratio and if students don't enroll, it compromises our budget. Kindergarten teachers support one another. We need to add new busses and drivers for new schools. We have to stagger school starting schedules to accommodate bus schedules. Going south of the freeway is a problem for transportation. It really makes people unhappy when severely handicapped students are on the bus too long.

Why can't we use local college students?

The district can't use volunteer labor to replace bargaining unit members.

Why aren't there sidewalks at new schools?

Conversations between the district and city have been going well concerning sidewalks. Just on the Summit High School project the district paid 1.4 million in City fees for infrastructure costs, i.e., sewer, water, electricity, etc. The city has agreed to provide Ruble Middle School's sidewalks. They funded \$250,000 for them to be poured.

What kind of sex education and gang education do we have at an earlier age?

The newly formed Student-Superintendent's Council will be addressing the issues. The Health curriculum is being adopted just as we adopt textbooks. The textbooks will be brought to them for parent input. Student safety is one of the goals each principal has to meet. They have to prove how they have met their goals.

Students have asked for a presentation on sex ed curriculum by the curriculum director and want to have a healthy discussion.

Comment: A parent who is a labor and delivery nurse volunteered that when she talked to teen parents, they all have said they wished their parents would have talked to them and explained things to them. The schools should help facilitate conversation with families. Almeria had a parent institute that was very successful.

Comment: Parents have concerns regarding the way parents speed through the campus at kinder dismissal time. At some schools the traffic is forced into the street instead of in the parking lot. A lot of parents were ticketed at Fontana High School for letting their children out in the middle of the street.

Comment: Primrose students cross Foothill and everyone has been lucky that students haven't been hurt. There is a crossing guard that helps the students. The district and city are investigating the possibilities of installing a light but the corner belongs to Fontana, Rialto and the County.

VIII. *Other*

The next meeting will be held April 6th, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Sierra Lakes Country Club. Mr. Randall Lewis of the Lewis Corporation donated the facility and food for these meetings. The May meeting may be held in the early evening from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

The state gives money for building schools. If the district qualifies, you only get 70% of what you need. There may only be \$50 million given and we will need \$70 million. That's why some modernization projects are started and couldn't be finished. The bond would help build the seven elementary schools we need. We are building a fifth high school and need another middle school. Right now Fontana needs another ten schools for the projected 10,000 student growth predicted.

Dr. Milligan thanked the parents for two hours of their time. He speaks from the heart and didn't want a list of questions prior to the meeting. He knows parents don't want to be put off and is looking forward to working with parents. He again thanked Mr. Lewis for the use of Sierra Lakes. He also thanked Cali Olsen and her staff for their assistance in making arrangements for the meeting.

The Council will review the bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order at the next meeting. The California Teachers Association will be providing three days of training in April for School Site Council members.