

Eye On The Board

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Board Highlights

September 28, 2004

EAHS struggles with “glitches,” large classes

A steady stream of Everett Alvarez teachers described a laundry list of complaints associated with growing pains – overpopulated classes and new building snafus.

Teachers complained about burgeoning class sizes in physical education, lab science and English and bristled about glitches in the new building.

One teacher at EAHS has a 200-student workload, said **Bev Kennedy** of SVFT. “It’s hard to give students individual attention or to correct papers.”

Kennedy said on top of an average of 53 students per class in PE, there’s no hot water and improper air filters in the new building. “It’s a health and safety issue,” she underscored repeatedly. “It’s affecting learning.”

Although the administration and trustees did not comment on the class size issue, Associate Superintendent **James Earhart** said the health and safety issues get a quick response from the district. “We’re on them . . . We’re not sitting back.”

Reported by Mariann Klinger

“All new buildings have glitches,” he said. Although the building was released by the contractor, Earhart said the district is listing the problems. “We have a long list.”

According to Kennedy, Everett Alvarez and Salinas High schools both suffer from large class sizes, but it was EAHS teachers that paraded to the podium.

Robert Richmond, chair of the faculty senate at EAHS said large class sizes is a chronic issue at the school. For the past four years teachers have dealt with too many students in some classes. Over time, he said, “it has an effect on campus morale.” Richmond said the master schedule underwent several revisions, one even after school began. The result, he added, was confusion as teachers try to cope with the changes.

One coping technique is to take on another class, according to EAHS Athletic Director **Chuck Norian**. “Many teachers take a sixth period option to take care of the overload.”

Trustees okay revised dress code

The board unanimously passed a recommended dress code policy after simplifying the wording. The policy, up

for the first reading at the previous meeting, now calls for professional standards of dress on the part of the district's employees, but states that it is the responsibility of employees to match their dress and grooming to the role they play on the job.

The revision stemmed from complaints from SVFT President Phil Moore, who called for the simple language. "It's clear the district and board do want a policy," he said, adding that he appreciated their willingness to take another look and make the change.

Moore asked trustees to eliminate the word "professional" from the policy, but Superintendent Roger Anton and several board members supported the word's use. "It doesn't say tuxedo or coat and tie," said Anton, emphasizing the lack of specifics. The word professional is important, he said, it sets the tone.

Trustee Kathryn Ramirez agreed. Teachers are professionals, she said. Ramirez and Trustee Anne Brown explained the rationale behind the policy. "Some (teachers) come frumpy looking," said Ramirez.

Brown added that she knew of between 18 and 24 incidents when parents complained about a teacher's dress.

Consent Agenda

Trustees voted 6-0 (Sandra Villarreal-Ocampo was absent) to approve:

- An agreement with Aurum Consulting Engineers to design the electrical and construction drawing for the new intercom system at Alisal High School.
- Authorize the retention of Hardy Nielson to manage miscellaneous construction projects.

Board Policies

Adopt the following policies:

BP 5131 – Conduct
BP 5131.6 – Alcohol and Other Drugs
BP 5131.62 – Tobacco
BP 5140 – Welfare
BP 5141.22 – Infectious Diseases
BP 5141.23 – Infectious Disease Prevention
BP 5141.33 – Head Lice
BP 5142 – Safety
BP 5144 – Discipline
BP 5145.11 – Questioning and Apprehension
BP 5145.12 – Search and Seizure
BP 5145.3 – Non-Discrimination/ Harassment
BP 6146.3 – Reciprocity on Standards of Proficiency
BP 6153 – School-Sponsored trips
BP 4012.61 – Employment References
BP 4112.2 – Certification
BP 4119.22 – Dress and Grooming
BP 4141/4241 – Concerted Action/ Work Stoppage
BP 4143/4243 – Negotiations/ Consultations
BP 4300/4400 – Management, Supervisory and Confidential Personnel
BP 4317.4/4417.4 – Dismissal/ Suspension/Disciplinary Action

Rescind the following policies:

BP 6191 – Criteria for the Evaluation of the Instructional Program
BP 4112.1 -- Contracts