

Eye On The Board

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Board Highlights June 9, 2009

Reported by Mariann Klinger

Title 1 plan takes reform school-wide for LPMS students

Program sets goals, creates three teaching commitments

La Paz Middle School qualifies for a new Title 1 amendment that allows eligible schools to upgrade its educational program for all students.

The plan generated by the LPMS community focuses reform efforts on its entire academic program, where past funding required plans to target the lowest achieving students.

“When an entire school is the target of change, you have much more success,” Director of Special Projects **Ruben Pulido** told trustees.

Pulido said over the past year staff, faculty, parents and members of the community worked to develop a plan that will be put into effect this coming year.

This new emphasis serves all students, improved all structures, uses all resources toward a common goal, according to his report.

It’s been a year long process converting the current target assistance plan to one that serves all students, said LPMS Principal **Steve Oliver**.

It was decided that faculty and staff would have to pledge to do consistently and faithfully whatever the plan identified, he said.

In the course of developing the program 10 possible commitments were identified, including six strategies and four policies, said Oliver.

All agreed that they could go three of the ten faithfully and consistently, including a great start, writing emphasis and shared reading strategies, he added.

The goals set forth for the year-long plan, included high standards for all students, proficiency for English language learners, quality teachers and a sane environment, according to Oliver.

Since LPMS is also the recipient of a quality schools grant, classes are reduced in size. That means much of the funding of Title 1 will pay for teachers, said Oliver.

Title I is a federal program earmarked for supplemental programs for low income students that may also be low achievers. The amendment, part of NCLB, allows schools to use state, federal and local monies to develop a school wide plan where at least 40 percent of the students are poverty level.

LPMS students are 97 percent Hispanic, 90 percent socioeconomically disadvantaged. Eighty-four percent received free or reduced lunch and 59 percent are English language learners.

Denials of interdistrict transfers prompts look at district policy

A stream of disgruntled parents seeking interdistrict transfers for their students prompted the county board of education to complain about the district policy.

District policy allows for a review of requests for interdistrict transfers. Many are approved. However, when the requests are denied parents

may appeal the decision to the Monterey County Board of Education.

Typically, only one or two appeal the decision, but this year an exorbitant number of parents appealed, said Superintendent **Roger Anton**.

Instead of one or two, thirty-five interdistrict transfer denials reverted to the county board, he said.

As a result, the county board doesn't like the policy and wants trustees to change it, he said, adding "I don't recommend changing it."

"It sounds like the county board doesn't want to review the requests," said Trustee **Phillip Tabera**.

Anton said in previous years interdistrict requests came in at about 400, but now they are down to about 280. Most seek transfers for their middle school students to Gavilan View, Washington Union and Buena Vista.

Seeing the choice of schools, Trustee **Margaret Serna-Bonetti** took offense. "Our schools are just as good as any other schools," she said.

This year 83 requests were denied by administration, 35 appealed and another six were approved.

Tabera noted that parents could come to the board and speak in public time to voice their appeals with the district before going on to the MCOE board.

Hundreds of students follow this process, he said.

Anton recommended a review and ultimately an endorsement of current policy. He discouraged the district board from conducting appeal hearings.

Policies

The following policies were adopted by a vote of 6-0 (Trustee James Reaves was absent.).

BP 4011.2 – Legal Status Requirement

BP 4113 – Assignment

BP 3280 – Sale, Lease, Rental of District-Owned Real Property

BP 3320 – Claims and Actions Against the District

Consent Agenda

Trustees approved the following by a vote of 6-0.

- Award the bid for the SHS Performing Arts Vortek rigging, drapery system and production audio speaker rigging to Musson Theatrical. Measure F funds are to pay for the slightly more than \$500,000 project.