

Galt Joint Union Elementary School District
Board of Education
“Building a Bright Future for All Learners”

Special Board Study Session

Board of Education
Galt Joint Union Elementary School District

Tuesday, February 19, 2019

GJUESD District Office
1018 C Street, Suite 210, Galt, CA 95632

Board Members Present

Grace Malson
John Gordon
Matthew Felix
Thomas Silva
Wesley Cagle

Administrators Present

Karen Schauer
Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano
Donna Mayo-Whitlock
Lois Yount

MINUTES

- A.** The Study Session was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by Grace Malson followed by the flag salute.

- B. Public Comments** for topics not on the agenda
There was no public comment.

- C. Session Goals to Advance District Direction**
 - 1. Clarify district factors for refining, reducing or restructuring services given progress, needs, budget landscape and feedback.

 - 2. Receive board feedback, ideas and direction for continuous improvement.

The Study Session provided focused time for the board to learn together more deeply and provide direction about a range of district factors that are being considered for planning efforts in the 2019-20 school year. District factors included academic progress and improvement areas, feedback trends, budget considerations and grant resources.

Karen Schauer shared learner and researcher quotes that summarized the direction the district has sustained since 2011-12 to optimize student learning. Additionally, she shared research from the new State Board of Education President, Linda Darling-Hammond and Channa M. Cook-Harvey; Educating the Whole Child: Improving School Climate to Support Student Services. Similar to GJUESD’s Bright Futures strategic plan, the research maximizes personalized growth and achievement through identifying learner strengths, needs, interest and aspirations.

Dr. Schauer shared the GJUESD Multi-Tiered System of Support Logic Model to show what it takes to serve the learning needs of every child, including special needs students. She indicated that during the 2017-18 school year the district had 7 Key Refinement Areas (KRA’s). The district now has 4 based on direction from stakeholders and the Board.

The district is looking at a variety of data sets, state and local academic indicators, Gallup Student Poll, Special Education Performance Indicators and District Snapshot when reviewing school district direction and refinement areas. She compared the process to looking through a kaleidoscope.

John Gordon inquired about micro-credentialing.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano stated that the district has not prioritized an implementation plan at this time.

Mr. Gordon asked how much preschool funding comes from the base general fund.

Donna Mayo-Whitlock stated that phone systems and some custodial work come from the base general fund. The rest is funded through Title 1 for special education and federal preschool funds.

John Gordon asked to what degree does the district take a “deeper dive” into the various resources the district is using to potentially streamline curriculum.

Karen Schauer referenced Linda Darling-Hammond and the Whole Child Learning Model Concept Framework and what is most leveraging to get at rigor in ways that look at social-emotional and academic high expectations.

Dr. Schauer shared a draft GJUESD Refinement Focus Conceptual Mapping with Grant Alignment. She highlighted the focus on whole learner rigor and how to best get accomplish it.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano spoke to the Low-Performing Students Block Grant. She indicated math as an area for improvement. The grant could focus on mathematical strategies and practices that could include stipends to teacher leaders who are providing professional development or pay consultants.

Karen Schauer stated it may not be affordable to add additional coaching but there is feedback that there could be a restructure that includes lead teachers providing professional development across the district. She indicated the district continues to budge reductions that may be partially offset by grant funding.

John Gordon asked for clarification on the use of Gooru and/or Illustrative Math.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano responded. She indicated Lake Canyon Elementary, Valley Oaks Elementary and McCaffrey Middle School are using Gooru in select grade levels. Teachers are finding Gooru reports difficult to process as they are so detailed. The district is working to determine whether to use Khan Academy or Gooru or both. Ms. Del Toro-Anguiano said Gooru may have improved performance at Lake Canyon. Two Gooru software engineers will visit classrooms to try to better understand needs and make adjustments.

Matthew Felix stated it is difficult to articulate to parents the growth model with traditional achievement. He indicated there should be a focus on how we can improve tests scores.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano stated that achievement may not be based on a program the district is using but rather the quality of instruction. She indicated strategies used in the past were successful such as common assessments and teacher collaboration time.

Karen Schauer stated that when the district appears to be significantly stronger in English language arts than mathematics. Additionally, most districts in Sacramento County and the state are in a level of technical assistance. GJUESD is making enough improvement that we are not receiving required technical assistance. When GJUESD is compared by grade level with the county and state the district is above the state average for Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) for most grade levels. There is a level of improvement that needs to be made in special education and English learner subgroups.

John Gordon indicated his concern with having two math programs, Khan Academy and Gooru. When does the district decide what is effective and what is not.

Matthew Felix stated so much is dependent on good teaching. What can the district do to support teachers.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano stated the district could focus on how teachers deliver instruction. Due to declining resources, the district has not been able to give teachers as much support to refine their practice. The district could restructure the coaching cycle.

Matthew Felix asked what other districts are doing to improve standardized test scores.

Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano responded that other districts are using pacing guides, etc.

Karen Schauer stated Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) professional learning model is an example of a best practice that can be considered with professional learning in other content areas.

John Gordon asked what roll Gallup Strengths plays in student achievement.

Karen Schauer stated schools that are making intentional use of strengths are showing improvement.

Jennifer Collier addressed the Board. She shared what it means for a person to do what motivates them. Giving students the opportunity to do what their good at is a foundational piece of the Gallup Strengths assessment.

Karen Schauer shared the GJUESD California Dashboard results and Performance Indicator Review (PIR) for Special Education data sources demonstrate a need to strengthen efforts for students receiving special education and English Learner services.

A potential multi-year preschool grant can expand preschool opportunities and strengthen parent engagement in alignment with the new Governor's budget proposal for Early Childhood Education.

Donna Mayo-Whitlock shared special education statistics in the district. She indicated a reduction in services over the last few years due to early intervention strategies. The district is considering moving a program from one site to another and reducing special education instructional assistants, based on IEP needs.

Karen Schauer stated this would be one example of a restructure. Other examples include co-teaching models where special education and regular education teachers are planning and working together.

Donna Mayo-Whitlock stated the Governor is putting dollars into inclusive models. GJUESD has been identified as having solid inclusive programs and may be in the running for funds.

D. Budget Resources and Facilities Considerations

Karen Schauer reported one of the biggest challenges is preparing for approximately \$600,000 in budget reductions due to rising costs and declining student enrollment. She indicated the 2nd interim budget report will be presented at the March 27, 2019 board meeting.

Lois Yount reported on the Governor's budget proposal. She indicated the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) proposes a slight increase and unfunded pension liabilities expect a one-time payment to CalSTRS to reduce long-term liabilities for employers, which will relieve some of the burden of districts' pension costs. The other areas of the state budget are still unknown at this time.

Ms. Yount shared the district budget reserve compared to other Sacramento County School Districts. While the school district meets the minimal state budget reserve requirement at 3.86%, it is lower in comparison to most Sacramento County School Districts. She indicated a "healthy" budget reserve is important for cash flow needs and to prepare for a future recession.

Ms. Yount shared considerations when determining the minimum reserve that could include deficient spending, declining enrollment, size of district, state and local economics, low cash flow in November and December, etc.

Karen Schauer stated that the district bond rating could have been better if the district had a higher reserve.

Board members agreed to research other school district policies regarding budget reserve levels.

Karen Schauer stated the district continues to have conversations with the City of Galt regarding future development projects and the potential for increased student enrollment. Part of the conversation also includes consolidating transportation services and continued interest in different properties owned by the district. The Farm to Futures Center would cost 40 million to build out. There are foundations that have expressed interest. A consideration could be to create a foundation to raise funds of this nature. She spoke to a parcel tax considered years ago and facilities grant funds that may be available in the fall. She recounted the district's past research on a parcel tax that did not move forward and the Department of Education facilities grant for Career Technical Education.

Karen Schauer stated the district is considering potential reductions or restructuring of staff that includes natural cuts due to enrollment trends. She indicated the Governor's Budget is not identifying any one time funding. In addition, the school district is implementing an early retirement program for qualified veteran teachers which would help to meet the budget reduction target.

John Gordon asked about budget savings due to a previous agreement with GEFA to relax class size stipends.

Karen Schauer stated the district would need another agreement to continue the savings of approximately \$37,000.

E. Board direction on next steps included:

1. Identifying and implementing essential learning practices and expectations across the district
2. Implementing mathematics improvement efforts and professional learning
3. Research budget reserve policies from multiple districts
4. In future meetings, provide more specific reduction or restructuring ideas for board review
5. Examine property lease with grant ideas to further develop the Farm to Futures Center east of McCaffrey Middle School

F. Board Protocol Discussion

Grace Malson reported board protocols were last addressed was in 2010. She asked the board if there was anything they wanted to add, change or review. An example is social media guidelines.

Board members agreed to have Karen Schauer and Grace Malson research protocols related to social media and bring information back to the board at a future meeting.

G. Pending Agenda Items

1. School Furniture Analysis and Pilot Programs
2. Technology and Learning
3. School District Properties
4. Food Services Nutrition Guidelines
5. SELPA

H. Adjournment 7:58 p.m.

Matthew Felix, Clerk

Date