

LA HABRA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
 Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting
 500 N. Walnut St.
 La Habra, CA 90631
 November 10, 2010

Call to Order Regular Meeting	The formal call to order of the Board of Education Special Meeting of the La Habra City School District was called by Board Vice President, Sharon H. Brown, at 5:00 p.m. There being no Public Comment, Trustees adjourned to Closed Session.
Board Members	<p>Board Members Present: Sharon H. Brown, Vice President Linda Navarro Edwards, Clerk Paul S. Rodriguez, Member Cindy Frisbie Hecklau, Member</p> <p>Board Member Present via Teleconference: Susan M. Hango, President</p>
Administrators	Administrators Present: Susan Belenardo, Ed.D., Superintendent
Second Call to Order Special Meeting	Board Vice President, Sharon H. Brown, called the Special Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 6:40 p.m.
Public Comment	<p>Board Vice President, Sharon H. Brown, recognized those who had submitted a card to speak to Agenda Items 7a and 7b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nicole Azpeitia – Wished to let the Board know how the status of negotiations has affected her personally. What you are doing is all about our kids. We are here to give them voices; they are little people at the developmental stage of their lives. She had received a teleparent the evening prior assuring her that should the teachers go on strike, her children would continue to receive quality instruction. Her concern is that the substitute will not have the relationship with her child as the teacher he has been with the past months. Will the substitute teacher know her child well enough to call her when he is struggling through the subject matter? She feels the district cannot guarantee that a child's life is not turned upside down because every face they see on the school campus is no longer a familiar face. What about the kindergartener that will suffer the anxiety of separation all over again because his teacher, whom he has come to know and trust is now on strike. Do not compromise or undervalue my child by not giving him a qualified teacher that develops his mind as well as his sense of self. My security will be compromised by not knowing whose hands my child is being left in. ▪ Cindy Krueger – Teacher at WMS – Was hired right out of College and has taught for over 30 years and loves La Habra, but not so much anymore. She feels that the value of teachers has gone down and they are not respected. She feels the respect of ex-parents and students and present students and it makes her sad. She questioned how many others take home work every night of the week and many weekends and spend money out of their own pockets on incentives, lab supplies, student recognition, novels and many more things. Why wasn't the Board present for negotiations? Why? Isn't that the job of the Board? Do what's right, not what's easy. ▪ Ramon Alejandre – Everybody has cuts, everybody has crises. He questions the \$96,000 for conferences and travel, \$560,000 for consultations and attorneys? That money could go to our teachers. He told the Board they are as accountable as the Superintendent. It's a simple decision, it's not hard, this I'll tell you right now, if there is a substitute teacher come Monday, my child will not be in school. They do not deserve second rate, they deserve first rate. We need to talk about the teachers and this contract. They are taking pay cuts and benefit cuts. They're not asking for raises when they should, they are asking for something fair. They understand what's happening. It's the Board's responsibility, you were voted in, we expect how we voted. How many times do we have to come down here to have you listen to us and what we want? Do what is responsible and get it done. ▪ <u>Response from Dr. Belenardo:</u> The LHCS D "Fact Sheet" was provided to Mr. Alejandre to clarify information he had addressed earlier alleging a misuse of district funds. This fact sheet was provided to all employees, parents and the community at large via the La Habra Journal. She gave a detailed explanation of expenditures included in the funds Mr. Alejandre had referred to earlier clarifying the misinterpretation of figures he had quoted. <p>**Board Vice President, Sharon H. Brown stated that if a respectful environment could not be maintained, the Board of Trustees would take a break. Due to continued disruption and out of order comments from the audience, Ms. Brown declared a 5-minute break to restore order.</p>

Public Comment (Cont.)

- Marianne Duron – (requested a copy of the Fact Sheet and it was provided to her) – She stated she is very concerned with the district as the district has not found a way to get beyond the contract impasse. “I only ask that you find a way to come to a suitable and intelligent settlement. Using a legal precedent to enforce your will is unbecoming to officials who claim to be bargaining in good faith. Like many other parents at Las Lomas, my appreciation and confidence is very high in regards to the teachers at Las Lomas.” She does not believe a substitute teacher is qualified to show the interest and recognize the needs of her son as well as the teacher and the special education staff. She will keep her child home for as long as it takes. The deadlock is affecting the school staff, as well as the parents. She asked the Board to redirect the focus and resolve this issue now.
- Mark Smith – 6th grade teacher at IMS – Mr. Smith explained that in teaching Social Studies he often explains to students that the reason for studying history is so we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past. He shared what he felt to be a brief history lesson on the school district. Not once in the first 108 years of the school district did a contract negotiation between the teachers union and the district result in the need for an official FactFinding process. Not once in those 108 years were the teachers put in a position to have to take a Strike vote. Not once in those 108 years did the teachers actually have to go on Strike to ensure their just and reasonable contract. That is a testament of the board’s predecessors’ desire to honor and respect the teachers that have served this community. There was a time when teachers wanted to work in this district and felt proud to say they worked in La Habra. Sadly, there are some that would say that in a short 6 years, that legacy lives no more. For years, the school board has had a reputation for being a rubber stamp for whatever the Superintendent has wanted. One current board member told a colleague that she just does whatever Dr. Belenardo wants her to do. Mr. Smith pleaded with the Board to take charge of this bitter negotiations battle and honor the FactFinding report as they had said in a previous meeting. He stated that what was different in the past 6 years is that Dr. Belenardo had been hired by the board and in the ensuing 6 years, contract negotiations between the district and LHEA evolved into the need for FactFinding, not once, but twice.
- Evelyn Szekely – substitutes in the district – She did her undergrad at UCLA, her Master’s Degree, and now cannot find a job in education. She has been subbing at a school in the district for the past week and a half and has had a great experience. The regular teacher for that class has no heart or soul for the kids in that class right now. The kids sense this. The kids have asked the substitute why she can’t be their regular teacher. The principal has noticed what a wonderful job the substitute does as well. Ms. Szekely feels teachers cannot do their jobs to the best of their ability because they can’t concentrate because of what is happening in the school district and the kids are suffering. She stated that these teachers are here to settle something and it is important that the time is taken to listen to them. These teachers can achieve and teach these children what it really means to pursue their dreams.
- Robert Hanna – Parent – “I’d just like to start off by saying, you can’t even pay these teachers who do the best job out here enough, and expect us to believe you’re going to pay these substitute teachers enough to teach our kids? Now you’re going to go out there and buy the cheapest thing you can possibly find out there. Really, you might as well go get a bum off the streets to teach my kid, because it costs you less. You know what I’m saying? (directed to Dr. Belenardo) There is no reason, and I expect, cuz I saw you nod your head like this (shook his head yes) when they said, “you’re going to take the same cut as they are”, and you said yes, I expect that! You’re willing to take the cut, then why can’t you just settle on the agreement and say hey, leave it as is, we’ll be happy, why even have to do it? Let the attorneys stop getting sued; do the job the right way! You know, come on. If my daughter’s going to be affected by this, trust me, I will never forget your face (pointing at Dr. Belenardo), she will never forget, she’s always going to remember that ONE person that ruined her education, and you’re going to sleep with that every night, and so are all these people here.”

Board Member Paul S. Rodriguez: “Sir, with all due respect, you have every right to say what you want to say but we’re going to be respectful here, and those things are unacceptable, with ‘I’m going to remember your face’, that can easily be read as a threat. I’m just telling you we are going to respectful here for everybody. Thank you.”

Mr. Hanna: Last but not least, all the parents that are here, do NOT cross that picket line, keep your kids home. There is a thing called Interdistrict Transfer, do not put forth her way! That’s all I’ve got to say folks.

Public Comment (Cont.)

- Dana Inman – Parent – She voiced that hearing someone say the teachers aren't teaching with a heart is just way beyond her because in the 5 years she has experience in the district, there are no better teachers in the world. She came from a district in Bellflower. Her child is a handful, and everyone who has dealt with her son has been wonderful. Her son is on a 504 plan and her fear is the same as others, a substitute coming in isn't going to know how to work with her son and meet his needs. The children deserve continuity and the best, which is what they are getting right now. Please do the right thing.

General Matters

Action Item:

Resolution #41-2010 /
Implementation of
Revisions to the Prior
Contract Between the La
Habra City School District
and the La Habra Education
Association

On a motion made by Paul S. Rodriguez, and a second to the motion by Cindy Frisbie Hecklau, Trustees unanimously tabled this agenda item with a roll call vote:

Cindy Frisbie Hecklau – Aye
Paul S. Rodriguez – Aye
Linda Navarro Edwards – Aye
Sharon H. Brown – Aye
Susan M. Hango – Aye (via teleconference)

**Comment from the Board
of Trustees**

Cindy Frisbie Hecklau made a statement on behalf of the Board of Trustees: "First and foremost, we as a Board have a responsibility to teachers, parents and community members to maintain the finances of this district. We have been in discussion for the past fourteen months. The financial picture of this district continues to deteriorate. Today we received an invitation from LHEA for a discussion. We cannot act on this legally because it is a discussion. We need a written proposal from LHEA as soon as possible. This resolution has been tabled tonight, but it will be on the agenda next Thursday and there will be a vote. Thank you."

Action Item:

Resolution #42-2010 in the
Event of a Concerted
Refusal to Work by
Employees

On a motion made by Paul S. Rodriguez, and a second to the motion by Cindy Frisbie Hecklau, Trustees unanimously tabled this agenda item with a roll call vote:

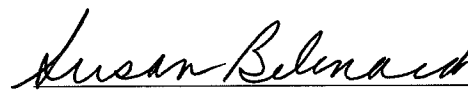
Cindy Frisbie Hecklau – Aye
Paul S. Rodriguez – Aye
Linda Navarro Edwards – Aye
Sharon H. Brown – Aye
Susan M. Hango – Aye (via teleconference)

Adjournment

There being no further business meeting items before the board, Board Vice President, Sharon H. Brown, adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Board Minutes Approved:

November 18, 2010



Susan Belenardo, Ed.D.
Secretary to the Board