

## SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHOOLS TASK FORCE

### MEETING NOTES #4

June 7, 2023

1. Welcome back by Dr. Joe Farley, Facilitator  
Pledge of Allegiance led by Reagan Headrick, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
  
2. Review of Meeting Protocol Agreements by Dr. Joe Farley, Facilitator  
Meeting protocols were again reviewed, i.e., one person talking at a time, keep emotions in check, etc.
  
3. Summer Meetings  
Wednesday, July 26th at College View MPR and a tour of the school after meeting  
Wednesday, August 16th in the Board Room, Building A  
Wednesday, August 30th in the Board Room, Building A  
Will share the dates chosen for the fall meetings when they are finalized

**INFORMATION PACKET** - Keith Farrow, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services, and the District's Chief Business Official (CBO), provided a packet of information to the Task Force on May 10th - <https://www.ovsd.org/schoolstaskforce> - and started explaining the information below that wasn't covered previously. Questions were asked and answers provided on these topics and unrelated topics. On May 10, 2023, the task force reviewed pages 4-13. On May 24, 2023, the task force reviewed pages 14-15 and then skipped to pages 20-21.

Starting on page 25 of the packet -

4. Staffing Overview - Reagan Headrick
  - Continuing conversation from the May 24th meeting - shared a handout
  - Human Resources (HR) works closely with Administrative Services (AS) and Fiscal in reviewing the State budget.
  - In May, Governor Newsome provided a revision to his January preliminary budget - called the Governor's May Revise. This information was shared with the Board of Trustees at the May 23rd Board meeting.
  - HR works on staffing allocations, communicating with Principals, and is based on

enrollment. Enrollment is fluid. February enrollment looks different in June and through the first day of school. There are also GATE and student transfers to consider in the numbers.

- When HR looks at the enrollment numbers, they are only looking at General Education numbers and does not include mild/mod, mod/severe Special Education classes (those classes that are self contained)
- Per Education Code, March 15th is the date that the District needs to serve preliminary layoff notices (pink slips), if there will be any layoffs. For the 2023-24 school year, the Board of Trustees did not take any action to layoff Certificated teachers, thanks to Dr. Conroy's recommendation.
- Enrollment continues to be reviewed, and if the Board of Trustees were to take action for reducing staff, the final notices must be served on or before May 15th. HR provides additional reviews and legal proceedings, if necessary.
- At the June 6th Board meeting, Keith Farrow presented the Board with the 2023-24 Preliminary Adopted Budget.

Important for the task force to understand:

- There is specific contract language regarding transfer procedures with our bargaining unit, Ocean View Teachers Association (OVTA). Staffing allocations and projections are communicated with the school sites and HR proceeds based on the OVTA bargaining agreement
- In March, the sites start determining grade level preferences with the staff. HR determines the projected vacancies and projected Full Time Employees (FTEs). Staff follows students, so a potential reduction causes changes to be made by HR and provided to the schools.
- The District is experiencing teacher movement based on enrollment changes and this has been happening for several years.
  - Tentative assignments move based on enrollment changes
  - Spring View is losing 5 teachers for the 2023-24 school year and it isn't always the last one in, its first one out. These are discussions between staff and OVTA collective bargaining practices.
  - Smaller school enrollment might mean transferring a teacher who has been at the same site for 10-20 years.
  - Smaller school enrollment might mean transferring a teacher to another school AND another grade level.

- The process is emotional, stressful, and feels like they are losing their family.
- Stressful at a middle school when there aren't enough students, which leads to not enough electives, or teachers needing to teach an elective they aren't prepared for
- Based on contract language, in May the vacancies are posted and assignments open. HR oversees the District seniority list.

Comments: Staff, Principals, Teachers, and community members

- At the elementary level, teachers are a primary or an upper grade teacher. Gave example of new teacher being moved to site, having taught Kindergarten or 1st grade, now teaching 5th grade. "Welcome to a new site and a new grade level."
- Teachers may bounce from grade to grade and school to school
- Teaching different curriculums year after year takes time and energy for our teaching staff
- OVSD teachers are resilient - some find a new assignment not so bad and look at it as an opportunity to try something new and be passionate about; nevertheless, it is very emotional
- Last year Hope View lost 3 teachers who had been teaching at that site for 20+ years, then had to be moved to a middle school. A bigger enrollment number doesn't mean that they are fine/safe. Then, staff need to shift many grade levels. That's an example of what happened last year; but, it happens every year at different schools. With 600 kids, even Hope View wasn't safe - ALL schools are affected.
- To piggyback, this has been going on for years - the movement of the teacher is not something new. At a school for 20 years - that becomes their home away from home where they have established themselves with curriculum, families, and kids. Teachers are resilient as they care so much about their students.
- Leads to teachers approaching the District, with no opportunity to remain at their site, then possibly moved at the bottom of seniority. May look at other options.
- Reminder: Seniority does have an impact, but teachers work for the "District" as a whole. As far as movement, decisions are made with the least senior at that school site. Staff follow the students!
- Spring View has 5 teachers being moved for the 2023-24 school year due to projected low enrollment, the rumors that the school will close. So far, there are

86 6th-graders coming in with 170 8th-graders going out. So the math checks out and 5 teachers who have been working at Spring View for more than 15 years need to be relocated. It's very emotional, the staff is very tight knit, going on vacations together, very much a family atmosphere.

- Parent a product of Spring View and thrived. Submitted a transfer the second they saw the Board meeting in February. Child has difficulty adjusting, but just last week her child said "I want to be a Spartan!" Spring View is a great school and it breaks her heart that Spring is losing teachers. These teachers helped her child be successful in Honors and ASB. The writing on the wall means the school is losing electives and takes away the desire for students to attend and parents to want to send their child there.
- SDC students are not figured into the enrollment count.
- Important to acknowledge that College View and Westmont have preschools. Even though they are both staffed for 300, they each have over 100 additional students on the campus. Important to have all the information. School might look small, but those preschoolers are not in the count. Preschool classes are Special Day and also fee-based - those numbers don't staff the same as TK-5.
- Those Preschool students may not stay at College or Westmont, but may go back to their "home" school. Parent said 100% true, they are paying for fee-based preschool at College View, but will go back to Circle View in TK.
- Principal manages the entire site, including preschool, there's a custodian, etc
- A self-contained Special Day classroom staffing is different from General Education staffing. That staffing comes from the Special Education Department. Special Education is an umbrella - those students who receive Resource/Speech are counted in the General Education population.
- Those programs could be picked up and moved to some other site.
- Reagan thanked the teachers that are involved in the transfer process. It does hit every school, not just one or two as it trickles down. The District partners with OVTA to follow the procedures and maintain conversations.

QUESTION:

- Is GATE part of the bargaining agreement. GATE numbers are not included. Can they have 40 students?
  - District would look at contract language, HR would work with Teaching and Learning/GATE placement.

Looked at the Handout provided, which was similar to page 26, just a look at an elementary example of staffing - General Education staffing. Special Day classes not included in this sample. Students don't come in nice, neat little packages/perfect staffing boxes. It gets challenging if the ratios don't match the contract, but always need to meet the contract.

#### QUESTION:

- Regarding transfers - are they taken into consideration when doing the layoffs for the enrollment count? How do you take this info account when some are still waiting to see where those students are going to go?
  - While "pink slips" are given by March 15th, we have until May 15 to issue a final. Usually when May 15 comes around, we are staffed. It is quite a science as we make an estimation for September.
  - People who aren't in education, don't think about registering or may not know how to register. May just come in on the first day school is open or even the first day of school.
  - One of the favorite parts of the School Office Manager's job when they return in August is trying to find out who has left the school, moving elsewhere. People don't necessarily tell the school when they have moved. There are changes daily as the information comes in.
  - A teacher may be locked into a Combination class when he/she leaves for the summer, only to find out that they will be teaching a single grade the first day of school, or vice versa. We don't know the numbers until those bodies are in the seats.
- All schools and the District are continually advertising on their websites and on the District website to get registered. However, family situations change and change quickly, there may be a change in the family dynamic, a job change, a move, etc.
- Kudos to the District for providing TK Night, Kindergarten Night, Middle School Night, Innovative Programs Night, and continually advertising
  - [ovsd.org](http://ovsd.org) has an overabundance of information
  - Parent Square
  - Social Media - Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Family thinks they are going to leave and then they don't; plan for Kinders to show up and then they don't...
  - Shifting around at the last minute to form combo classes
  - Transfer student out of one class to another in the first 10 days

- Not a new phenomenon - been happening for years
- We let teachers go and then need to hire them back

QUESTION/COMMENT:

- With 6,809 students in the District, where would we stand if we combined them altogether/consolidated teaching staff. Curious about taking 6,809 and dividing it by 30. How many teachers fit with those kids?
  - Staffing is based on contract language
  - A reminder to the task force that we are currently overstaffed by 900 students - 900 more students than are actually present. It's staggering how much that represents. A new, more accurate figure than was provided to the Board of Trustees is that it represents \$3 million in costs because we are not getting any funding for those students. Approximately \$100,000 with benefits (lower estimation) of staff we could release - 30 teachers x 30 students = 900.  $\$100,000 \times 30 = \$3 \text{ million}$
- Comment: Looks like we would need to consolidate 2 ½ - 3 schools based on the numbers we have now.
  - The right size a school should be is between 500-600 for an elementary school and we have quite a few in the 300 range.
  - Middle schools should be high 800-900 and some over 1,000 (neighboring school district). Would love to see 800-900 at a middle school. The numbers never fall out the way they should or the way we'd like them to.
- Comment: Elephant in the room...when 4 schools were proposed to close in the beginning? What would be the best? To close all 4 schools - or leading to combo classes in every single grade/school.
  - Hopefully, we'll get to that answer and that's what the "task" is. We will get there.

Dr. Julianne Hoefler talked about school size on pages 27-28 of the information packet provided on April 26. She introduced herself and told a little about her background in her 30 year journey as an educator - classroom teacher-Principal-Director-Assistant Superintendent.

- School size impacts the educational experience - not class size
- Larger school tends to have more classes per grade or content area, depending on if it's an elementary or middle school
- Smaller schools tend to be more volatile
  - Example: 27:1 is the maximum at K-3 per contract.
  - Special Education inclusion - both General Education and Special Education

- students benefit from being together - if there is room in a classroom.
- 4/5 combination - 5th graders are typically not good candidates for a combination class
  - A larger school means more classes - kids make more friends; having more options gives kids more opportunities; minimizes “off task” behavior; more options to split up students who don’t get along.
  - A larger school means more PE and Music classes - itinerant teachers don’t need to travel as much or not at all
  - A larger school means more parent volunteers
  - A larger school means staff to share the activities and responsibilities of the campus
  - A larger school means more coaching staff for after school sports activities at the middle school level; often run out of coaches or coaches (often PE teachers) coach 3 or 4 sports. Now could include 6th graders.
  - Larger school sites might mean deciding on the difference between purchasing a specialized program that is either charged per school site or per pupil - vastly different in pricing.
  - Larger elementary schools tend to have fewer combination classes
  - Larger middle schools have more academic programs offered
    - With only 3 classes at Spring View in 6th grade, some end up in the same group for all four of their core classes. Hard to get them in a flow that works well with the master schedule (tetris on steroids). The student may need to be in a certain ELA or Math class and it’s not offered.
    - When you lose teachers, you lose more options for electives as the electives kids want may not be available because of the credential the teachers have to teach
  - Larger middle schools give kids a chance to branch out. They’ve been with the same kids from Kinder through 5th and they need a break from each other.
  - More Combination classes impacts students and teachers - no collaboration to build on each other’s ideas. On staff day, teachers may miss their one grade level Professional Learning Community (PLC) and is a disservice to the students academically.
  - Teachers give up their lunch time so that students can have “lunch bunch” or chess time, etc. Impact: Less teachers are willing to do those things, especially if changing grade levels, or have 4 different preps. Affects the middle school

experience for students, having safe space, learning about themselves, teacher's door may not be open for student help. Less of that - overworked.

- Larger middle schools have larger choirs, larger bands, performing arts need more students in the class
- Example of a site needing someone who could teach woodshop, robotics, and Spanish (all) and won't have the credentials to teach all. Small middle schools create far fewer electives.
- By middle school, after being together for many years, kids know how to push each other's buttons, act like siblings, become silly and precocious, and get a bigger response "if I....." They definitely need additional behavioral supports at that level.
- There is less support for shared staff - less time with students. Hard time for staff to serve on committees and take on additional responsibilities.

#### QUESTION:

- For those kids who would need to ride the bus, would the bussing increase if schools are closed? Fewer stops?
  - Currently, we have four different start times so Transportation can get to all the routes and drop off at start times. Could the buses be more full? In some cases, yes. Fewer schools would have an influence on why 4 start times and not fewer.

#### COMBINATION CLASSES COMMENTS:

- One parent loved combination classes and children thrived - 4 out of 5 students were in multiple combo classes. With a good, skilled teacher, children can thrive.
- Some do well in combination classes - usually independent and focused students. Not usually the normal type of student. While a teacher may be teaching 2nd and 3rd grade, they cannot teach all of both grade level content curriculums - impossible to have a whole grade level content curriculum taught in that year in a combination class. Those students who have behavior issues are not placed in combo classes, so behaviors end up in the same grade level class at smaller schools.
- Our staff is so dedicated that they end up spending weekends, an exorbitant amount of hours planning lessons.
- Some combo teachers work together and for a certain subject may take all the third graders (example)
- Someone else is taking the burden
- Not getting a robust education in a combination class - students must pace themselves



and be independent.

- A sample 3/4 combination doesn't work as they either need to go out to the same lunch (primary or upper), or they need to go to the same field trips (per grade level), unless another teacher is willing to keep them or take them on for lunch breaks.
  - Although, after the 3rd graders leave, the teacher has an extra hour with the 4th graders.
  - A 4/5 combo can work well for field trips, PE, lunch, etc.
- A sample K/1 combination might have super immature students - don't know what you're getting with an incoming Kinder. Never ideal - do you have the class sit on a carpet or sit in the chairs? Kinders cannot usually sit in the chairs. Less likely to have at a larger school.
- Before Sun View was closed, the whole school was made up of combination classes, K-1, 1-2, 2-3, etc. Lucky to have extremely talented and veteran teachers.
- Combination teachers are doing twice the job, 2 different grade level curriculums (Math, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies)
- Sacrifice made at all classrooms
- A non-combination teacher is dedicated to the core subject standards and grade level; devoted to delivery to just that one grade level.
- There could be a lopsided combination class fit - example, 25 4th-graders and 6 5th-graders. This is a common occurrence.
- Children end up losing at the end of the day
- Restricts modality to move through classroom rotations, easier in a single grade classroom. Opportunities for rotations are lost in the social development of children.
- Bigger picture, single grade classroom - more options, less behavior issues.

5. 2023-24 Preliminary District Budget Presentation

- a. Next meeting, Keith will bring the financials back that he presented to the Board of Trustees on June 6, 2023.

6. Closure and Reflections on Today's Meeting

- a. **End of the session.** Dr. Farley did mention the two recent articles (shared with the Task Force) in the LA Times and Orange County Register about declining enrollment, information is significant. OVSD is not the only district dealing with this situation. Asked that all read the articles and share with constituents.