

**NICASIO SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Minutes

~ **SPECIAL MEETING** ~

Wednesday, May 18, 2016 5pm

Nicasio School Library 5555 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio CA

1. Call to Order at 5:01pm

- **Roll Call** *In attendance: Trustees Michelle Rutledge, Jason Snell and Madeleine Sloane*
District staff present: Superintendent Tom Lohwasser, Principal Christy Stocker, Office Manager Mikki McIntyre and Chief Business Official Cheryl Robbins
At the invitation of Trustee Snell, each of the 20 members of the audience introduced themselves.

2. Approval and Adoption of Agenda

Action: **M/S: Sloane/Rutledge** to approve agenda. **Vote: 3/0** Ayes: Rutledge, Sloane, Snell; Noes: None

3. Public Comment

- Foundation President Mark Burton reported that 2015-16 fundraising efforts are coming to a close and that the May 14th Spring Luau dinner/dance appears to have been a “pretty good success,” possibly netting more than \$10,000. He said he hopes to provide a final report soon, but it looks like the Foundation is on track to fund the same amount to the school next year as it typically does.
- Patty Winkelmann said she saw a Ferrari speeding past the school and is looking into getting the speed limit lowered in the area near the school. Trustee Snell thanked her for her efforts and asked her to bring any new information to the Board’s attention.
- Lucienne Meckfessel expressed her appreciation to Christy Stocker for her “hard-working, fantastic 10 years. You will be sorely missed,” she said “and I wish you well.”
- Tory Grady added “I want to second that. Christy has been such a solid presence all along, and I really appreciate her.”

4. Discussion of the Second Interim Budget Report and New Financial Information

Discussion:

- CBO Cheryl Robbins described several adjustments to the budget since the second interim budget report, including Foundation revenues as well as additional expenses that have come to light.
- Supt. Lohwasser noted that since the second interim revelations about the District’s deficit spending level, Principal Stocker has worked closely with MCOE staff to get a good handle on the second interim and to move forward at the same time.
- Principal Stocker presented a Memo detailing the history of the District’s current budget since its approval in June, 2015. In summary, the district’s end fund balance goes from

(approximately) \$394K this year, to \$317K in 2016/17, and \$205K in 2017/18. In three years, the District will be significantly lower than its Board-designated reserve of \$245K, she said.

- Principal Stocker explained that due to unforeseen circumstances, business services and special education were much higher in 2015-16 than originally projected, and they are the two key reasons for the big increases in expenses this year. Business services, which were provided gratis to the District by MCOE 10 years ago, are now being delivered in a shared services arrangement with another district at an annual cost of nearly \$100K, she said. Principal Stocker described special education as a “moving target,” and said the costs budgeted last June did not anticipate the new special education needs that arose during the year, resulting in expenditures of approximately \$150K for special education programs and services.

5. Review Enrollment Projections for 2016-17 and Related Classroom Configuration Options

Discussion:

- Principal Stocker presented what she described as finance-driven enrollment and configuration recommendations for keeping the District moving in a positive manner. She noted that her recommendations resulted from a lot of time spent strategizing options with Supt. Lohwasser, CBO Robbins and MCOE staff.
- Principal Stocker reported enrollment projections of 48 students for 2016-17, including two kindergarteners (compared with six in 2015-16). She said those projections include 29 resident students and 19 IDT students, the combined total of which necessitates a third teacher. Looking at projections of resident students in future years, she noted, the numbers are steadily declining.
- Principal Stocker said that after further thought feedback from parents, it was determined that the alternate 5th grade configuration scenario she had presented at a previous Board meeting would not be optimal for the 3/4/5 and 6/7/8 classrooms.

6. Consider Staffing Options for 2016-17 based on Financial Status and Enrollment

Discussion:

- There was discussion about the ability of one teacher to teach three grade levels. Grandparent Terri Carlson said that as a former student of Nicasio School, she can attest that there were always three teachers who taught multiple grades and they did fine.
- Principal Stocker said that the new Common Core standards and Smarter Balanced assessments have dramatically changed the demands in the classrooms in recent years.
- In response to an inquiry by Parent Sharron Drake regarding the use of aides in the 3/4/5 classroom, Principal Stocker clarified that there is currently one aide assigned to that classroom for the sole purpose of supporting a specific student.
- Trustee Snell stated that the Board is not currently considering reducing the school to two core teachers. “Right now, the best situation is for three teachers,” he said.
- Supt. Lohwasser stated that MCOE Supt. Mary Jane Burke is very concerned about the District’s transition and has offered to provide any support needed, including floating jobs, transitional positions, etc. He recommended that the Board take advantage of Supt. Burke’s offer to provide input regarding the current principal, superintendent and business services issues.

- Principal Stocker recommended that the 40% of her current position that is teaching be re-assigned back to the core classrooms, which would represent a savings of approximately \$48K in the budget. She said that scenario would not only provide more options in staffing the principal position, but also create equity among the three core teachers. To support that change, she also suggested re-assigning the classroom aide across three classrooms to support teaching of the core subjects.
- Supt. Lohwasser recommended expediting the hiring of a certificated teacher to fill the vacancy in the 3/4/5 classroom.

Action 1: M/S: Sloane/Rutledge to hire a new 1.0 FTE certificated teacher fill the 3/4/5 teaching position in 2016-17. **Vote: 3/0** Ayes: Rutledge, Sloane, Snell; Noes: None

Action 2: M/S: Sloane/Rutledge to eliminate the .4 FTE teaching portion of the principal's current assignment and to re-assign those duties to the respective core homeroom teachers. **Vote: 3/0** Ayes: Rutledge, Sloane, Snell; Noes: None

CONTINUATION OF MAY 5, 2016 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

At the May 5, 2016 regular Board meeting, the trustees requested more time to evaluate second interim budget information as it relates to approval of IDTs. They agreed to continue the meeting to May 18th at 5pm to consider IDT renewal and new requests. Following is a continuation of the May 5, 2016 Board Meeting agenda:

7. Consideration of Renewal Interdistrict Transfer (IDT) Requests into NSD for 2016-17 (May 5th Meeting Agenda Item #8c):

- i. IDT #16/17-02
- ii. IDT#16-17-03
- iii. IDT#16-17-05
- iv. IDT#16-17-06
- v. IDT#16-17-07
- vi. IDT#16-17-08
- vii. IDT#16-17-09
- viii. IDT#16-17-10
- ix. IDT#16-17-11
- x. IDT#16-17-12
- xi. IDT#16-17-15
- xii. IDT#16-17-17
- xiii. IDT#16-17-18
- xiv. IDT#16-17-19
- xv. IDT#16-17-20
- xvi. IDT#16-17-21
- xvii. IDT#16-17-24
- xviii. IDT#16-17-28
- xix. IDT#16-17-29

PREVIOUS DISCUSSION (from May 5, 2016 Meeting):

- {Supt. Lohwasser said that although Shoreline Unified School District (SUSD) has not yet signed the countywide IDT agreement for 2016-17, he has learned they plan to approve

it at their upcoming board meeting. Trustee Snell said the second interim budget information makes the IDT requests “a bigger conversation.” Mark Burton said the Foundation and the community have long been supportive of IDT students at the school. In response to a query about whether IDT families can be vetted based on how active they are in supporting the school, Principal Stocker responded that no such consideration is permitted. By state law, she said, the only determinant is by lottery, and decisions cannot be made on any other basis. “If you have room and you have more students than can fit under the cap, you have to hold a lottery,” she said. The trustees expressed their concerns about making a decision regarding IDT requests without further analysis of the sudden change in the District’s financial status. Supt. Lohwasser, noting that recent projections of deficit spending over the next three years will bring the District below the state mandates, agreed and recommended closer study of the budget picture.}

NEW DISCUSSION (May 18, 2016):

- Principal Stocker stated that she wants the IDT families to know they are a vital and valued part of the Nicasio School Community, and it is the District’s intent to keep that family as whole as possible.
- She recommended that the Board not approve any new IDTs for 2016-17 because there are too many uncertainties due to the District’s financial situation. On the advice of legal counsel, she also recommended that the District renew IDT requests in accordance with Board Policy and within each classroom capacity. Because the IDT renewal requests for the 3/4/5 classroom exceed capacity by three seats, Principal Stocker recommended that the Board deny IDT renewal of students (there are three) who will not have a sibling enrolled in 2016-17. She also recommended approving IDT renewals from SUSD on a conditional basis, pending that district’s signing of the countywide IDT agreement.
- Parent Sharron Drake said it was her understanding that at the March meeting, the Board approved a policy revision allowing the classroom to go over capacity. Principal Stocker said that given the resignation of 3/4/5 core teacher Julianne Bretan, the unknown experience level of her replacement, the wide-ranging needs of the students in that classroom, and a larger teaching load next year, it is not advisable to exceed the established capacity.
- Parent Patty Winkelmann said it did not seem fair that IDT students with siblings who arrived at the school this year could displace students without siblings who have been at the school longer. Principal Stocker said that is the current Board policy and anyone who would like to propose revision of the policy can make that request to the Board for future consideration.
- Supt. Lohwasser said that Principal Stocker is trying to put a pause on additional financial impacts to give the District a chance to assess the situation, identify options and plan carefully as they move ahead. He further stated that the IDT policy (BP/AR 5117) was approved by the Board and vetted by legal counsel, and therefore, he supports Principal Stocker’s recommendations.
- Trustee Sloane inquired if there was a way to put the denied IDT renewals on a waitlist. Principal Stocker replied that it would be up to the Board, but technically, they would be new IDTs and there would be a lottery.
- Principal Stocker then presented her “Recommended Next Steps” for the District, including the following:

- Meet with Supt. Burke as soon as possible
- Consider creation of a .8 FTE Superintendent/Principal position and salary schedule
- Provide a one-year overlap with the current superintendent to support the transition
- Explore options for business services
- Supt. Lohwasser concluded the discussion by saying that Principal Stocker “really cares about this place. She may be leaving, but she wants to leave the District in good shape. She has put so much time into creating all of these scenarios and we made good progress today, particularly by putting the teacher position into place.”

Action: See item below for “Combined Actions” for May 5, 2016 Agenda Items #8c and #8d:

8. Consideration of New IDT Requests into NSD for 2016-17 (May 5, 2016 Meeting Agenda Item #8d):

- i. IDT #16-17-01
- ii. IDT#16-17-04
- iii. IDT#16-17-13
- iv. IDT#16-17-14
- v. IDT#16-17-16
- vi. IDT#16-17-22
- vii. IDT#16-17-26
- viii. IDT#16-17-27
- ix. IDT#16-17-30
- x. IDT#16-17-31

Combined Actions for May 5, 2016 Agenda Items #8c and #8d: M/S: Sloane/Snell accept the recommendations of Principal Stocker not to approve any new IDT requests, and to approve IDT renewal requests in accordance with Board policy as outlined – giving priority to renewal of students who will have siblings enrolled in 2016-17. **Vote: 3/0** Ayes: Rutledge, Sloane, Snell; Noes: None

9. Conclusion

- **Adjournment**

Action M/S: Sloane/Rutledge to adjourn meeting at 6:31pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mikki McIntyre

Unadopted

Adopted

Madeleine Sloane, Clerk