

BALLARD SCHOOL DISTRICT

2425 SCHOOL STREET
SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA 93463
(805) 688-4812

SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

Wednesday, April 28, 2010
7:00 p.m., Multipurpose Room

1. CALL TO ORDER

Julie Farrell called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

All board members were present. Guests numbered approximately 50 people.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Julie Farrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (items not included on the agenda)

None

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Should the Ballard School District...

- Permit a limited number of transfers into a grade when enrollment at that grade is less than 16? Transfers would be accepted up to 16 students. If the class were to exceed 20 students in the future (due to additional students moving into the district), transfers would be revoked to maintain smaller classes.
- Permit a student to attend Ballard School if his or her parents own property in the Ballard School District, even if they do not physically reside in the district?
- Permit a student to attend Ballard School if the parent either works at Ballard School or is physically employed at an established business that is located within the school district boundaries?

Julie Farrell welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for participating in the board meeting. Julie assured the audience that no decisions had been made and that the board was truly interested in hearing their opinions and thoughts about the three questions. She requested that comments be productive and positive.

Allan Pelletier's opening remarks included:

- The board has dealt with this issue for many years.
- He did not think that a forum such as this had ever taken place at Ballard School. He also thanked the audience and expressed appreciation for their input.
- The staff and board have had conversations regarding whether or not classes can be too small. Would there ever be any benefits to increasing the enrollment slightly? Some staff believe this to be true, while some staff disagree with this notion.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS (cont)

- Ballard school prides itself in small class sizes. If we allowed interdistrict transfers, what would be the “perfect number”? We have been using 16 for the sake of discussion and because it is still a small class size.
- Including a limited number of transfers might be a way to minimize the need for combination classes.
- Basic Aid funding has been under increased scrutiny this past year at the state level due to the cuts in funding for education.
- The topic of school district consolidation has also come up recently. While this does not seem to have traction, and some crazy things would have to happen, it does not hurt to start thinking about these issues.
- It is important that Ballard continue to be perceived of as a thriving, relevant school district. Will accepting a few more students help in this regard?
- The second question raised is that of property taxes. If a person owns property in the district but does not reside in the district, should that person’s child be allowed to attend Ballard School?
- The third question raised is that of working within the school boundaries. Should a person be allowed to send his/her child to Ballard in this case? The current policy allows attendance for people employed at Ballard School or employed a minimum of 30 hours per week at an established business located within the school district boundaries.
- No decisions have been made. The purpose of the meeting is to solicit input from the community.
- We would ask that comments not include specific names, especially students.
- There are different opinions in the room and it is okay to disagree. The good news is that everyone wants what is best for the students.

<p><u>Question 1:</u> Permit a limited number of transfers into a grade when enrollment at that grade is less than 16? Transfers would be accepted up to 16 students. If the class were to exceed 20 students in the future (due to additional students moving into the district), transfers would be revoked to maintain smaller classes.</p>	<p><u>Question 2:</u> Permit a student to attend Ballard School if his or her parents own property in the Ballard School District, even if they do not physically reside in the district?</p>	<p><u>Question 3:</u> Permit a student to attend Ballard School if the parent either works at Ballard School or is physically employed at an established business that is located within the school district boundaries?</p>
<p><u>Daryl Kemp</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Would have a negative effect on property values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • People who pay taxes are contributing to the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • This is the current policy and it makes sense.
<p><u>Diane Devine</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • From an educational perspective, why would the board want to do this? • Students are doing well as they move along. • Combination classes aren’t always bad. They weren’t for my child. • Families have made sacrifices to attend Ballard. • The board that hired the superintendent/principal made it clear that the transfer issue was sacred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Likes the current policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No problem with the current policy except that it is not well defined. • Need to define an ‘established business’ and come up with a clean policy, or get rid of the policy

<p><u>Grant de Goede</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Agreed with Diane Devine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like further explanation about this policy • It needs to be tightened up
<p><u>Diane Nielsen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Shared information about class size research • Shared information about basic aid school district cuts, and asked if it made sense to add students when these cuts are in place <p><i>(Allan shared that basic aid school districts work with a lobbyist organization called Schools for Sound Finance, which came up with the Basic Aid 'Fair Share' concept. The was a proactive effort, the thinking being that basic aid districts need to have budget cuts comparable to revenue limit districts. The contribution is \$252 per student, or approximately \$27,000, for the Ballard School District in 2009/2010.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaning toward supporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaning toward supporting • If teacher's child, yes
<p><u>Dawn Wilson</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Some people buy in Ballard so their children may attend school here. • Renting in the district, making a commitment to children's education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indifferent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine with current policy
<p><u>John Owens</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Make sacrifices to live in this district • If not broken, don't fix it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Have to live in the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few legitimate businesses in Ballard • Should be allowed to send kids here if work at Ballard
<p><u>Micah Brady</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Bought in district to send kids here • As a real estate broker, confident that Ballard School adds value to real estate. Would not want to change that. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports

<p><u>Sherrie Petersen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Concerned about using a lottery to accept students • Would be disruptive to revoke the transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports
<p><u>Mia Sanders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Why would you not allow a person who pays property taxes, but allow somebody who does not, just because that person works within the district boundaries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Needs to be an established and visible business, and the person needs to physically work there
<p><u>Jenny Breiner</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • A person who works here and pulls children should not have the choice to bring the child back. <p><i>(Julie Farrell asked for clarification and Ms Breiner reiterated her statement.)</i></p>
<p><u>Anna D'Alessandro</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Already have a core group of students • The 2nd grade class started with 17 and is now up to 22. • Parents buy or rent in the district so their children can go to school at Ballard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Agrees with current policy • What if the renters also have children who will come to Ballard? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify • Yes if an established business or a teacher/staff member • No if working in a home office
<p><u>Ben Ladinig</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Ballard is unique and that is why people live here. • This is a bad idea. • The 2nd grade class has 22 students, perhaps some additional resources could go to classes that are larger than others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports if the person works within the district boundaries and contributes to the school. • Perhaps there needs to be an oversight committee to determine if a business is legitimate.

<p><u>Teese Murray</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Expressed appreciation to the board for soliciting input • Would just be a handful of kids • Don't want to go through what other small districts have had to face (referred to Summerland Elementary) • A few more students might have a positive influence on dynamics • Ballard has been enriched by previous transfers to the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • If they pay taxes in the district they should be allowed to send children here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Perhaps we can 'grandfather' in everyone who is at Ballard now.
<p><u>Chris Kazali</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Thinks this is slippery slope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • If contributes then should be allowed to send children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Came to Ballard based on employment last year • There are complexities involved when determining an established business.
<p><u>Ingrid Jackson</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports • Nobody wants to see a class size increase dramatically. • Daughter was in a very small class and was in a combination most of her years at Ballard • Disagrees on the value of combination classes 		
<p><u>Gina Floyd</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems that we sometimes lose students to Dunn in the transition from 5th to 6th grade. • Perhaps an exception could be made when this happens. 		
<p><u>Linda Carlson</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support • Loves having small classes • From a teacher's perspective, when classes are smaller I can be more creative • This is part of what makes Ballard unique. 		

Kerry Enderle

- Children no longer attend Ballard
- There is a big difference in their class sizes now (25 and 31) and their class sizes when they were at Ballard.
- There is not as much care and support.

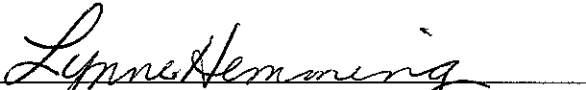
The board also received emails/letters regarding this issue from the following: Lynzi Blacker, Stephanie Holthaus, Sandy Knight, and Linda Shier.

Julie Farrell again thanked everyone for their participation and the terrific turnout. Shawn Knight and Lynne Hemming also expressed their thanks and appreciation for what the community had to say.

6. NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Julie announced that the next regular board meeting would be held on Wednesday, May 12, 2010, at 6:00.

7. ADJOURNMENT – Time: 8:35 pm (**Special thanks to those in attendance who helped stack the chairs!)


Lynne Hemming, Clerk of the Board

5-17-10
Date