

## West Valley School District #208

### Community Forum Minutes Monday, April 17, 2017

After having been advertised as required by law, the Board of Directors of West Valley School District No. 208 held a Community Forum, on Wednesday, April 12, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., in the High School library, 9800 Zier Road, Yakima, WA 98908.

**Board of Directors** present: President Michael Thorner, Mike Carey, Dave Jaeger, Mike Meyer, Jeffrey Smith, and Student Representative Chloe Williams.

**Administrative Staff** present: Mike Brophy, Angela Watts, Peter Finch, and Recording Secretary Debbie Chronister.

**Community Members & Staff** present: Mark Strong, Megan Razey,, Anne Rojan,Michelle Sanderval, Zoe Lindner, Kim Seal, Heidi Sutton, Cheryn Zimmer, Kristin Williams, Janet Rouleau, Dawn Perez, Melissa Paul, Ben McMurry, Michelle Mueller, BJ Hilyard, Chris Abeyto, Peter Marimace, Stephen Robertson, Laurie Barber, Stephanie Morehouse, Wendy Clark, Danielle Kurtz, Susan Olden, Rebekah Olden, Jared Jones, Melissa Jones, Jen Ditter, Michelle Siguenza, Vu Le, Amae Merrill, April Holt, Jenny Lindner, Karen Devaney, Keri Button, Libby Hodge, Ryan Mathews, Eva Lust, Ian Garriques, Taylor Bosch, Melissa Vicente, Ryan Vicente, Karla Carter, Lucas Jaeger, Kira Palmer, Tiffany Williams, Cheryn Zimmer, Amie French, Zhefeng Gu, Jolene Wells, Gary Miller, Jerry Prescott, Kim Walker, Ann Sherman, Marissa Durham, Cindy Lacey, Christina Talbot, Gary Moding, Amy Knautz, Toni Paganelli, Steve Campbell, Chandra Harpel, Rick Harpel, San Park, Karen Craig, Nikki Olden, Hunter Olden, Ellen Mellander, Joe Campos, Sam Mazhin, Maegen Otterstein, Linh Tran, Nathan Craig, Jaime Whittum, Jennifer Young, William Hancock, Jesse Golbek, Brandi Thomas, Russel Tuman, Matthew Lindner, Danielle Crawford, Kim Cruzen, Alice Campbell, Tammy Bosch, Helen Faringer, Dawn Williams, Zach Scheidegger, Saunyy Busby, Libby Hodge, Audeen Smart, Stephanie Campbell, Amy Stephens, Brian Hays, Manar Mustafa, Sara Allen, Mamie Winters, Cheri Grange, and Lucy Rodriguez.

**Call to Order:** At 6:00 p.m., President Michael Thorner called the meeting to order.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Michael Thorner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes to the agenda.

### **Introduction to Public Forum**

Michael Thorner thanked community members for their attendance and explained the process of the Community Forum. Attendance boundary and program revisions are administrative recommendations presented to the Board for their consideration. No decisions have been made. The Board will discuss and may make a decision in an open public meeting, April 24, 2017.

Dr. Brophy provided a brief statement about the need for boundary changes. This is a result of working with the County Department to address accommodating the growth, while minimizing the impact on students as much as possible. These changes would affect programs currently in the district.

President Thorner invited community members to speak.

Nathan Craig, who has served on previous committees, recommended the district create a new facility plan. He said the previous committee had a broad plan and capacity was the issue at that time.

Michael Thorner requested Dr. Brophy provide the committee information for Board members to review.

Parents shared personal testimonies of the hardships they would experience if their students have to move to another school. Suggestions and concerns shared were: sending the families in the new construction complex to another school instead of sending current students to a different school; daycare issues; school families being split; grandfathering 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders; the frustration of this being a short-term fix; families who recently purchased a home in specific neighborhoods; and modifying schedule to be a year round school district. Parents expressed their disappointment regarding the rush to action since the bond failed and the lack of communication. Other community members expressed support to modify boundaries, not liking it, however, respecting the difficulty of the decision. One parent requested that if the attendance areas are revised to have teachers, counselors, and principals be prepared to help these students adjust.

Ms. Chronister was advised to send Ann Rojan's letter to all Board members as presented to President Thorner.

**President Thorner directed the discussion to the PAL Program.**

Many attendees from all areas spoke on the reasons to keep and enhance the current PAL Program. Others stated there is a need to improve learning for all students. Complaints were heard regarding the lack of support and communication for testing into PAL.

Teachers and principals clarified misconception and/or misperceptions. They also gave examples with results of what is being done in the classroom of homeschools to meet the needs of highly capable students.

President Thorner directed Dawn Williams, State and Federal Programs Director, to send the total number of PAL Programs offered in the state to the Board.

Concerns and questions were brought forward regarding advanced programs at the Middle School. Dr. Brophy stated that communication could improve and revision a possibility, however, we do have an outstanding advance program in West Valley.


The Board asked Dawn Williams to explain the process for students entering the PAL Program.

Suggestions were made for West Valley to improve PAL, testing, communication, training for teachers, increase admin support, pursue more highly capable programs in the district, and increase competition. Also suggested was to change the process: test all students, make program opt out instead of opt in, and develop a framework for other types of programs.

**Summary by Michael Thorner**

President Thorner expressed his appreciation for those that have attended the forum to express their concerns. He assured the group that Board members take this very seriously. He recognized great passion on all sides of these issues.

Community forum adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

  
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Michael Brophy, Superintendent

  
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Michael Thorner, President