

**Bacich Elementary Site Council  
Meeting Minutes  
March 5, 2018**

**Attendees**

Sally Peck, Principal, Co-Chair  
Kathryn Supinski, parent, Co-chair  
Victoria Denson, teacher  
Isabella Fanning, teacher  
Brittnee Gonzalez, teacher  
Jen Wallen, teacher  
Marty Ross, teacher  
Christina Chan, parent  
Kari Canon, parent  
Alisa Rubel, parent  
Lauren Vaughn, parent  
Liz Schott, Superintendent  
William Cargill, Parent  
Ashley Paff, Kentfield School Board Member, Finance Committee, Treasurer

**Approval of Minutes**

Committee formally approved the minutes of the Site Council meeting held on February 5, 2017.

**Budget Presentation from Superintendent Liz Schott**

Ms. Schott presented the budget to the Committee. She discussed California's economic forecast noting that at the beginning of the year, Governor Brown proposed another balanced State Budget. As it relates to our school district, Kentfield, 2017/2018 revenue total \$18M and is derived from property taxes (24%), fundraising from KIK (6.6%), PTA, and other local sources. Similarly, for 2017/2018, expenditures total \$18M for which the top 3 categories are certificated salaries (42.8%), employee benefits (23.9%), and classified salaries (11.8%). With respect to reserves, 3% of our budget is required to go into a state mandated reserve with an additional 2% designated by our district. The reserve also consists of amounts for special education contingency (in the unusual case of a student with exceptionally high need) and an amount for undesignated reserve. Ms. Canon asked if reserves roll over year to year and Ms. Paff confirmed that it does. Ms. Rubel asked where funds would come from if we wanted to increase the headcount of paraprofessionals. Ms. Paff responded that, as it relates to paraprofessionals, such funding requires a long-term funding source. Hence, funds from KIK/PTA cannot specifically fund salaries. However, through their annual commitments of a fixed amount to the district, these funds can then be used towards various programs at the school which may include headcount in paraprofessionals.

In California, there are two ways to fund a district: District Funding Under LCFF, or "Basic Aid" District Funding. In Kentfield, we are Basic Aid funded which means our property taxes equate

to the cost to educate a student (approx. \$8K) and any excess is retained by the district. Although property taxes in our area is high, there is not much excess in our district.

The Parcel Tax Measure passed in Feb 2009 and sunsets June 30, 2019. Under this measure, residents paid anywhere from \$773 to \$1,200, per unit while commercial properties paid more as it is calculated by square footage. On March 6, 2019, the results of the current Measure A will be released and we will understand if this source of funding will continue. If Parcel Tax is not approved, example of programs that would be eliminated are: specialist-taught Art, Music, and PE @ Bacich; class sizes less than 33 at Bacich & Kent, Spanish at Kent; Computer Education/Technology at Bacich and Kent; Credentialed Library teachers at Bacich and Kent; Support for Special Education; and Upper level Mathematics (7+, Algebra). These programs total approx. \$4.5M. If the Parcel Tax is not approved, we would continue to provide an education but not at such an enriching level. If necessary, cuts would not be made until 2019/2020 as the District is required to provide one year notice.

Pension contributions. Teachers are required to be a part of the State Retirement System (CalSTRS) for which the teacher and the district both contributes. As part of the system, teachers are not eligible for social security. Ms. Supinski asked why the table shows an annual increase in contribution each year but begins to level off around the 2020 timeframe. Ms. Paff responded that an actuarial study was performed a few years ago and in order to keep the system solvent, contributions needed to be increased by both the teachers and the districts. The increase phased in over time. Ms. Rubel asked how unfunded future obligations will be met and Ms. Schott noted the increases in property taxes and community support keep it solvent into 2020, even taking into account state mandated pension contribution increase, and salary and benefit increases. The richness and diversity of our education programs, as well as our small class sizes, depends on the 25% of our budget provided by the parcel tax.

### **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teachers**

Ms. Peck provided an update of the Next Generation Science Standards at Bacich Elementary School. Ms. Peck discussed Bacich's relationship with Lucas Education Research Center, based in San Rafael, who provides project based learning education to our teachers. Specifically our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher recently attended a unit at the Lucas Education Research Center who shared their experience with the group.

Ms. Brittney Gonzalez, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, shared with the group that the 4<sup>th</sup> graders are currently focus on a unit about 'our land'. At the Research Center, they experienced the unit from the perspective of students so that they can better understand and direct learning within their own classroom. They learned how land was form but the driving question was to teach students how to research and take it to the next step such as learning how different weather sequences impact land formations. As part of this unit, the next process is to go to the local creek, observes the wall formation, and return to the classroom where they will build a creek. From learning about creeks, the goal is to expand to larger topics such as how mountains are formed. The last lesson will be to understand their impact to the environment and how to prevent things such as erosion (eg. when you are hiking and sit on a cliff). It is a long process but quite comprehensive. Ms. Denson, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher, shared that her seminar was a Toy Unit where students are focus on modelling and how things work. For example, the class is focus on

making a car launcher and students are to investigate how to make the car stop or turn after launching.

Ms. Fanning, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher, shared examples of how NGSS is being implemented in her classroom. Recently her class did a walking fieldtrip to study the local marsh and animals. The student's observations guide the learning materials in the classroom such as observations of the birds, weeds, and other types of grasses/plants. From the birds, the next stage of learning focused on the different features of the birds such as wings, beaks, and how they adapt to survive at Creekside Marsh. As part of the unit, students will create a replicate of the birds they are studying. Ms. Fanning shared with us the tool the students built for measuring wing spans of the Canadian Goose and how these tools will be used by the students to build accurate replicates of the species. The driving question of the unit is 'why do we care?' The students will also give back to the community by replanting grasses or other native plants in the future. Ms. Ross, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, also shared that the students are also learning about trout. There's a nationwide program called "Trout in the Classroom" where anglers participate and help guide the program. The last stage of the unit is to teach about pollution.

Ms. Wallen, Kindergarten teacher, shared that kindergarteners are learning about weather pattern. The students recently used solar beads to make bugs and observe how they changed in and outside of the classroom in the sunlight. The next step is to create a shelter to see if the bug can be protected by the sun. Ms. Wallen noted that PBL in kindergarten is more guided compared to other grade levels.

After the teacher's presentation, Ms. Peck summarized that an important part of Project Based Learning includes guiding principles, driving questions, and more importantly creating solutions to problem. How science is taught in the classroom has evolved from a fact-based lecture to the integration of various subject areas (eg. math, art, and science) in the classroom.

### **Committee Reports/Updates**

There were no committee reports or updates this month.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on April 2, 2018, 3pm, Bacich Library