

ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

The mission of Albany Unified School District is to provide excellent public education that empowers all to achieve their fullest potential as productive citizens. AUSD is committed to creating comprehensive learning opportunities in a safe, supportive, and collaborative environment, addressing the individual needs of each student.

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
ALBANY CITY HALL
1000 San Pablo
Albany, CA 94706
TUESDAY
January 9, 2018

I. OPENING BUSINESS

A) Call to Order

President Black called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B) Roll Call

PRESENT: President Black, Vice President Stapleton-Gray, Board Member Blanchard, Board Member Clark, Board Member Trutane, and Student Board Members Attanayake and Silwal.

STAFF: Superintendent Valerie Williams; Allan Garde, Chief Business Official; and Marie Williams, Director III, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment,

C) Pledge of Allegiance

The Board and members of the public who wished to recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

D) Reading of the AUSD Mission & Vision Statement

Student Board Members Attanayake and Silwal read the AUSD Mission & Vision Statement.

E) Approval of Agenda

President Black requested a motion to Approve: Albany Unified School District Board of Education Agenda for the January 9, 2018 Regular Meeting. Motion by Member Clark, seconded by Member Trutane. The Board was polled and passed unanimously.

F) School Spotlight: Albany High School

Albany High School Principal, Alexia Ritchie, addressed the Board regarding the School Spotlight on Albany High School and highlighted three student led organizations (SEAC, SPEAK, and STAND). Ms. Ritchie introduced Albany High School student, Anna Baker-Heims, a member of the group titled SPEAK that was started after Instagram incident at Albany High School. SPEAK members go into to AUSD fifth grade classes to talk about racism and discrimination. SPEAK members have already presented to eleven classes last year, and visited every fifth grade classroom this year.

They are planning a comprehensive set of four lessons, one per quarter, opening with the history of racism and discrimination. A lesson on privilege will start mid January. Digital citizenship and a call for ideas for action at the elementary school sites will finish the series. Another Albany High student group spotlighted was STAND. The STAND group focuses its efforts at the high school itself. They have reached 900 students with a discussion about sexism and racism, also reaching 40 teachers and administrators. STAND hosted an immigrants' rights rally and are preparing a series of parent education presentations. The other Albany High School student group spotlighted was SEAC, the Superintendent's Equity Advisory Council group, that was formed by Superintendent Williams. The SEAC group meets regularly with Superintendent Williams to discuss issues of equity at Albany High School (to view the presentation and comments, visit www.ausdk12.org).

G) Approval of Consent Calendar

(The Consent Calendar includes routine items that may be handled with one action. Board Members may request any item be removed from the Consent Calendar without formal action.)

1. Board of Education

a) Minutes of the November 28, 2017 Board of Education Meeting

The Board requested the following revisions:

J) PERSONS ~~TO ADDRESS~~ TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

2. Human Resources

a) Certificated Personnel Assignment Order & Classified Personnel Assignment Order

3. Business Services

a) Resolution 2017-18-07 – Signatures (Payroll Documents)

b) Resolution 2017-18-08 - Signatures (Official Documents)

c) November 2017 Warrant Report

d) November 2017 Donation Report

4. Curriculum & Instruction

a) Approve School Accountability Report Cards (Elementary)

b) Quarterly Report on Williams Uniform Complaints (Oct - Dec 2016)

c) Overnight Field Trip: Albany High School Speech and Debate Club to Stanford University Speech and Debate Tournament in Santa Clara, California

Member Trutane thanked both SchoolCARE for a \$274,000.00 donation and Albany Education Foundation for a \$16,000.00 donation that were listed on the November 2017 Donation Report.

President Black requested a motion to Approve: Consent Calendar. Motion by Member Blanchard, seconded by Member Trutane. The Board was polled and passed unanimously. Member Black abstained from check number 51031595.

H) REVIEW AND ACTION

1. Appointment to the City of Albany Community Media Access Committee (Student Appointment)

Superintendent Williams addressed the Board regarding the student appointment to the City of Albany Community Media Access Committee and stated that the purpose of this item was for the Board to review and approve the appointment. The City of Albany Community Media Access Committee advises the City on changes to the Cable TV access policy, operations for KALB and cable related activities, video production training opportunities for Albany residents, and Albany based programming. The Board of Education appoints two members – one adult and one student. The City of Albany Community Media Access Committee appointment term is two (2) years. Jeremy Allan, KALB Media Administrator, is the City of Albany Community Media Access Committee Liaison.

Student Board Member Silwal stated that she supports the appointment because of Raquel Ramirez's experience that is noted in the statement of interest below (to view the comments, visit www.ausdk12.org).

I am interested in being a student member of CMAC. My love of film and media has implored me to be a part of all aspect, from production to distribution, of the media making process. I have always strived to not be a passive consumer, and have always looked for opportunities to understand media on various levels. I've gained experience with public media as member of the Youth Advisory Board for KQED. CMAC would not only strength and grow my experience, but would allow me to have a more active role in my community. CMAC provides an excellent avenue to optimize access to media on a local level, a process that few people ever get to be a part of. At its core, media, in its various forms (whether it be film, television, or news), is about sharing stories about the human experience. Local media strengthens and promotes the voices of the community, ultimately acting as a unifier for the collective. In a place as culturally diverse as Albany, it is necessary for people to have access to the various experiences of their community members. It has always been a goal of mine to be a part of this empathy building process. In these politically divisive times, I feel that the best way to ensure compassion and empathic values in a community, is to support access to local media which would allow people to feel as if their voices are being heard. The method in which stories are shared has evolved. This may complicate the process of spreading information, but also makes it accessible to everyone. I want to be able to contribute to this integral part of the Albany community. Thank you for your consideration.

President Black requested a motion to Approve: Appointment to the City of Albany Community Media Access Committee (Student Appointment). Motion by Member Trutane, seconded by Vice President Stapleton-Gray. The Board was polled and passed unanimously.

I) BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Williams, Member Trutane, Member Clark, and Vice President Stapleton-Gray addressed the Board and made comments about district related events they attended and district business (to view the comments, visit www.ausdk12.org).

J) STUDENT BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Student Board Members Attanayake and Silwal provided the Board with the following Student Board Member Report:

In December, the AHS Choirs celebrated the 10-year anniversary and final round of Madrigal Delights! With an epic four course meal, three act play, and music all around, it was a night to remember.

The OceanView Sing Along was on Friday, December 15th in the Multipurpose Room. With holiday tunes and singing galore, the holiday spirit was strong.

AUSD's Black Parent Engagement Committee hosted Dine & Donate on January 4th at Farm Burger. It was a great night to come together as a community.

The Brunch De Reyes took place on January 6th in the Cornell Multi-purpose Room. It was fun for all!

Last night, AUSD implemented the Speak Up Be Safe curriculum created by the Childhelp organization. Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe is a research-based child abuse and bullying prevention education curriculum equipping students nationwide with skills they need to play a significant role in the prevention or interruption of abuse and bullying. In the coming weeks, all AUSD elementary students in grades 1-5 will be receiving their grade level Speak Up Be Safe two-part lesson series.

There will be no school on Monday, January 15th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

On Wednesday, January 17th, from 7-8:30pm, there will be a Parent Education Night at Marin. Professor Dr. Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton discusses the question : "How we can come together to talk to our children about discrimination and inequality." This event is presented to you by the Oceanview, Cornell and Marin PTAs.

The Albany Music Fund will be having a meeting on January 20th at 9:30AM in the Albany High School Choir room!

The Books Inc. book fair will be at Cornell from January 22nd through January 26th. Come on down for books and fun!

Student Board Member Silwal stated that she attended the Alameda Youth Empowerment Conference at the REACH Ashland Youth Center.

K) PERSONS TO ADDRESS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Board practice limits each speaker to no more than three (3) minutes. The Brown Act limits Board ability to discuss or act on items which are not on the agenda; therefore, such items may be referred to staff for comment or for consideration on a future agenda

No one addressed the Board on matters not on the agenda.

L) REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. School Accountability Report Cards (Secondary)

Director Williams addressed the Board regarding School Accountability Report Cards (Secondary) and stated that the purpose of this item was for the Board to review and discuss the item. All public schools in California are required to prepare School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs) and disseminate them to the public on or before February 1st of each year.

SARCs provide the public with important information about each public school, communicate the school's progress in achieving its goals, and provide parents with data and information to make meaningful comparisons between schools. Approximately 75% of the data required for inclusion in the SARC is provided by California Department of Education. The remaining data is gathered from site principals and District staff. Director Williams stated that from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016, the percentage of 8th grade students scoring proficient and advanced on the end-of-year CST science summative assessment declined from 82% (2015) to 77% (2016). During the previous three years, the average percentage of 8th grade students scoring proficient or advanced on the end-of-year CST science summative assessment was 78%. The dip in scores from 2015 to 2016 might be explained by a series of significant changes in science education at the state and local level that include: 1) The state adopted Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in September 2013; NGSS was subsequently adopted by AUSD Board of Education in November 2014; 2) With the adoption of NGSS, AMS adopted a new integrated model of science instruction. The integrated science course sequence organizes content so that concepts build naturally upon one another. The traditional model of science instruction arranged content in discrete subject specific chunks; and 3) 2015-2016 would have been the first year AMS 8th grade students experienced NGSS in the classroom; however, the 8th grade end of year summative assessment in 2016 was still aligned to the old science content standards. Assessments aligned to NGSS will be operational in 2018-2019. At that time, it will no longer be appropriate to compare end of year CST science summative assessments (administered up until 2016) with the new NGSS aligned assessments.

Director Williams stated that in December 2017, the Board was notified that the District would receive the highest possible performance ratings on the Fall 2017 California Dashboard in all areas except for suspension rate. A preliminary review of the suspension rate data revealed that the Instagram incident (and ensuing suspensions) did not have a significant impact on the District's suspension rates overall. Raw data showed that there were only 10 more suspensions at Albany High School in 2016-2017 than the prior year 2015-2016. The most significant increases in suspensions occurred at Albany Middle School. In 2015-2016, 22 students were suspended at least once at Albany Middle School, and in 2016-2017, 67 students were suspended at least once. The student groups with the most significant increases in suspension rates on the Fall 2017 Dashboard were: socioeconomically disadvantaged (+3.2%); students with disabilities (+3%); and Hispanic/Latino (+2.6%). Upon reviewing the suspension rate data, Albany Middle School immediately began engaging in conversations with their whole staff around strategies to reduce out of school suspensions. While they are not fully able to explain the reason for the increase in the number of suspensions from 2016 to 2017, Albany Middle School site administration has been working to refine its school discipline systems in order to reduce the suspension rate for the current and future school years. Site administration is in the process of reviewing and revising the site's discipline grid (in order to remove suspension as a first level consequence for many behavior infractions) and monitoring current suspension numbers very closely (to date 25 students have been suspended at least once). A suggestion was made to post a video of each school's Board of Education spotlight, along with these reports, on the AUSD website (to view the comments, visit www.ausdk12.org).

2. Albany High School Grading

Director Williams addressed the Board regarding Albany High School Grading and stated that the purpose of this item was for the Board to review and discuss Albany High School's grading practices because Board Policy 5121 requires the Superintendent or designee to establish and regularly evaluate a uniform grading system. Director Williams presented grade mark analysis data from Albany High School 2016-2017 spring and summer semester report cards that shows all grades earned that have a direct impact on graduation and college eligibility. The most recent Albany High School cohort graduation rate (2015-2016) was 93.3%. The University of California/California State University a-g completion rate for that same cohort (2015-2016) was 62.3%.

The Board, staff, students, and community members discussed that there are two possible reasons for the discrepancy in these two data sets, either not all students who graduated enroll in all of the courses needed to meet minimum UC/CSU eligibility requirements and/or not all students enrolled in UC/CSU eligible classes earn the required grade of C or better to fulfil eligibility requirements. The two key differences between the Albany High School graduation requirements and the UC/CSU a-g eligibility requirements are the number of credits students must earn in mathematics (two years for high school graduation and three years for a-g eligibility) and the number of credits students must earn in a world language course (two years for a-g eligibility and no requirement for graduation). Standards-Based Grading, Course Remediation, Course Validation, and Grading System Revisions were discussed as possible approaches for closing this gap between the cohort graduation rate and the UC/CSU a-g completion rate.

During the 2016-2017 school year, Albany High School piloted Haiku, a learning management system that includes a standards-based grading component. Director Williams introduced Albany High School Principal, Alexia Ritchie, who provided an update on the implementation of Haiku. Haiku was purchased for schoolwide implementation during the 2017-2018 school year. Standards-based grading emphasizes a shift away from the traditional assignment of letter grades toward evaluating student mastery of defined learning objectives. The Board, staff, students, and community members discussed the implications of standards based grading on college applications. Teachers who use standards-based grading convert their standards based grades into a final letter grade for the purposes of reporting grades on a report card or transcript. The “traditional assignment of letter grades” refers to the common practice of awarding points/grades for completion of tasks not necessarily tied directly to meaningful demonstration of content mastery (e.x. homework completion or subtracting points for late submission of assignments). The shift away from this practice emphasizes assigning points for demonstrating mastery of content and de-emphasizes the importance of completing tasks not tied to directly tied to mastery of content standards.

The Board, staff, students, and community members discussed multiple definitions of student success such as high academic achievement, successful career preparation, and social/emotional intelligence. There was a discussion about the need to broaden the definition of student success to include things like activities outside of the school setting. Students spoke about their struggles with unhealthy pressures at Albany High School to achieve both academically and socially. Teachers objected to discussions about Albany High School Grading practices taking place at the Board meeting rather than allowing the the discussions to continue to take place at the site level. After a discussion, the Board encouraged the school site to continue having discussions about Albany High School Grading practices (to view the discussions, visit www.ausdk12.org).

3. 9% Budget Reserve Policy

Chief Business Official, Allan Garde, addressed the Board regarding the 9% Budget Reserve Policy and stated that the purpose of this item was for the Board to review and discuss policy adopted by the Board at the April 7, 2015 Board Meeting. The minimum required reserve from the State, for a school district our size, is 3%. A number that the State claims ensures AUSD will have funds available to meet financial obligations. Dipping below 3% would provide a warning to the County or State that oversight may be needed. Mr. Garde stated that the 3% reserve requirement is not adequate because it does not reflect the volatility inherent in the State Budget process. State revenues represent about 80% of the total revenues received by school districts, and the State depends on revenues collected from a California’s high-income earners to provide these funds. Unfortunately, these funds are extremely volatile as evident during the Great Recession, from 2008 to 2011, when California saw a sudden 20% decline in Personal Income Tax revenues. Also, a 30% decline occurred in the stock market when the dot-com bubble burst in the late 2000’s. For these reasons, retaining the 9% reserve policy is recommended.

Mr. Garde stated that although AUSD began the Great Recession with a budget reserve of over 15%, AUSD had to monitor cash daily and delay payments by several months to local vendors, delay payments to PG&E for electricity, and make agreements with CalPERS, Delta Dental, and VSP to delay payments for employee benefits. Fortunately, AUSD did not issue loans to meet payroll obligations, or reduce the number of instructional days, or implement furloughs because of an emergency parcel tax passed on November 3, 2009. However, the State survived the Great Recession's \$130.2 billion budget gap by making sweeping cuts to programs, passing down services previously handled by the State down to the local level, utilizing accounting gimmicks by deferring payments to agencies which totaled \$35 billion in 2011, and placing a measure on the November 2012 ballot explicitly stating further reductions (mostly focused on education) will occur if the measure did not pass. Many school districts across the State survived the Great Recession by laying off staff, issuing loans to meet payroll obligations, delaying payments to vendors including local vendors and utility agencies, reducing instructional days by 5 (Temporarily allowed by the State), implementing furlough days to staff, and utilizing State grants for specific programs to pay for general items like utilities. Because of AUSD's 15% reserve, these types of drastic measures were not required by AUSD.

Mr. Garde stated that the current AUSD 9% reserve policy implements a Budget Priorities Process when in the 2nd subsequent year of the multiyear projections, the Budget shows a reserve less than 9%. The current AUSD 9% reserve policy accomplishes three important things; 1) Ensures sufficient cash on hand to meet payroll every month; 2) Ensures stability of programs throughout the unstable State Budget Process; and 3) Ensures time needed to engage stakeholders and implement a Budget Priorities Process to stabilize the budget. Member Clark stated that he did not believe that AUSD needs a 9% reserve. The Board, staff, and community members discussed that whether or not the current 9% reserve policy is retained, as long as there is an operating deficit, reductions will have to occur because the reserve does not replenish itself. The reserve is one-time money that will be gone when it is spent. Therefore, sooner the district makes the budget cuts that match income to expenses, the more reserve will be left. Speakers encouraged the Board to move forward on the planning process for determining cuts. Speakers also encouraged the Board to make reductions at the district office and complained about the recent raise provided to the Superintendent and the district paid health and welfare benefits provided to administrators. Member Trutane stated that the Board has worked with staff to ensure that the 2018-19 school year will proceed without school site staff reductions. Savings have already been generated by staff reductions at the district office, non-staff reductions at school sites, and reallocating funds internally (to view the comments, visit www.ausdk12.org).

M) AGENDA ITEMS/MATTERS INTRODUCED BY THE BOARD

The Board requested that the following items be placed on the agenda of an upcoming regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting agenda under Review & Discussion:

1. Hiring Freeze

N) EXTEND TIME OF MEETING TO 9:45 P.M.

President Black stated that a vote was needed to extend the meeting time past 9:30 p.m.

President Black requested a motion to Approve: Extend Time of Board Meeting to 9:45 p.m. Motion by Member Blanchard, seconded by Vice President Stapleton-Gray. The Board was polled and passed unanimously.

II. ADJOURNMENT

The Board believes that late night meetings deter public participation, can affect the Board's decision-making ability, and can be a burden to staff. Regular Board Meetings shall be adjourned at 9:30 p.m. unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Board.

The Board adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

Date	Time	Location
January 23, 2018	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Albany City Hall
February 13, 2018	7:00 – 9:30 p.m.	Albany City Hall