

ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board of Education Meeting Highlights 3/27/2018

By: Vice President Stapleton-Gray

The meeting opened with a spotlight on Ocean View Elementary. Teachers Bridgette Bañales and Izzy Cohen presented on teaching about culture, with students learning "languages of the week," and with considerable parental involvement, both in the classroom, and via video presentations.

The Administration presented Cheryl Cotton as the new Human Resources Director, to replace the retiring Cynthia Attiyeh.

During Board Reports there was some discussion of the City Council's addressing of the question of voting methods. While the Board had sent a resolution to the Council expressing an interest in ranked-choice voting (RCV) for School Board seats, but the Council does not appear to be focused on RCV. Cities and school districts are being sued under State law aimed at increasing representational equity in local elections, but the "safe harbor" in that law (that would provide a defense against a lawsuit) appears to be adoption of "by district" elections. The Board elected to revisit the question of petitioning the Council (AUSD is under the City charter, so changing election procedures for school board would be done by amending the City charter) in a future board meeting.

In their report, the student Board members announced that Saturday, April 21st would be STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Day at Marin Elementary.

Student Services Director Carrie Nerheim presented on the California Healthy Kids Survey.

Superintendent Williams gave an update on actions taken to address concerns in Special Education, supported by Special Education Director Diane Marie. Other speakers described the growth over time of the number of students requiring special education services, including a marked increase in autism as an issue.

Technology Director Dax Kajiwarra gave a presentation on the findings, for Albany, from the national Speak-Up Survey on technology in the schools, and available to students outside of school. Dax described the results as "the start of conversation" on technology needs, appropriate role for technology in the classroom, etc.

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Marie Williams and AHS Counselor Becca Burns presented on higher education enrollment trends, looking at the last several years of AHS graduates.

In closing, the Board indicated that future agenda items ought to include the issue of ranked-choice voting (per above), and directed staff to determine how the Board should take up the question of establishing a minimum wage, given the low rate of compensation for some positions (this arising from the discussion of paraeducation substitutes and issues around compensation and attendance).