

**Equity Task Force**  
**February 27, 2012**

**MINUTES**

The meeting began at approximately 7:05 pm.

The warm up activity, What's in a Name? was led by Marsha Brown, Director of Student Services. Members completed the worksheet and shared out.

The minutes from the last meeting (1.18.12) were reviewed, corrections made and approved.

Superintendent Stephenson provided a report on the February 7, 2012 Board of Education meeting. Two Board members had e-mailed the Superintendent with questions/concerns regarding a possible request from Marin PTA to donate a significant amount (around \$40,000) and possible equity issues this donation might raise. Since it was not on the published agenda, the Superintendent brought it up at the end of the meeting under Board/Superintendent comments.

There was a spirited discussion that ensued. The Board members unanimously expressed a desire that the Equity Task Force that had been convened to advise the Superintendent, be reconvened to advise the Board regarding parent funded donations (other than enrichment during the day) and bring recommendation(s)/policy back to the Board. The Board is loathe to turn down any donation, and certainly don't want to turn parents off of raising funds for public education. So they are looking for some policy to guide us in the future.

As it turns out, this large sum of money was amassed over a series of years. Holly White (Marin parent) stated that the money was somehow sitting in a script account that several secretary/treasurers had missed. There has been an ongoing discussion regarding technology at Marin, and has been identified as a gap, and these funds would go a long way to fill that gap. There is a special PTA meeting this Thursday to discuss. However, the Board request to the Task Force is not about technology; it's about policy.

The Superintendent indicated that the Board wants a plan for parity among schools; and is asking the Task Force to develop policy to guide the district from here on forward. To do that, it's necessary to reconstitute the Task Force, much like last year, to become a committee to advise the Board. She asked each member if they would be willing to accept a Board appointment to the "new" Task Force. Principals are already members. The Task Force has already identified a scope of work, and this item fits into that scope (#7 on the agenda).

A lively discussion occurred, clarifying questions, issues and priorities. One suggestion was that a smaller group (from the Task Force) could develop recommendation(s) regarding parent funded donations, and bring to the larger group.

Superintendent Stephenson indicated that as a committee that serves the Board, the Task Force would be subject to the Brown Act (for public meetings), so all agendas would be published in advance, meetings would be open to the public, etc. much as occurred last year. It will definitely take longer than May, 2012 to complete this work, probably May of 2013. The goal of the Task Force would be to analyze current district policy, look at other districts' policy in this area, and make recommendations to the Board.

In addition, the Task Force has taken on school diversity (see # 7 on the agenda). Taking this work on as advisory to the Board of Education makes it more public, visible and it could be controversial.

In addition, the Equity work has not addressed all sources of donations, such as the Albany Education Fund.

Members were then polled regarding their willingness to accept an appointment to a Board of Education Equity Task Force. Those who are willing will have their names brought to the Board on March 6, 2012 for appointment to the Task Force as voting members. The Superintendent will be the facilitator, and the Director of Student Services will take notes and occasionally co-facilitate. Neither the Superintendent nor the Director will be voting members.

The Task Force then reviewed the proposed scope of work (#7 on the agenda). The language was changed to the following:

The task force determined that its next scope will be to analyze the current demographics (student and staff) of each elementary site. The task force will examine current policies and programs and how they impact site demographics. The task force will advise the Board of Education on possible resolutions to any areas of inequity uncovered in its analysis.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 19<sup>th</sup> from 7 – 9 pm at the Albany Community Center.