

**District Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 12, 2013
Brandon Elementary School
195 Brandon Drive**

- 1. Call to Order:** Tammy Johnsen called the meeting to order at 9:15 am.

Attendees: Superintendent William Banning, Assistant Superintendent Elizabeth DeVita, Chris Messner (Kellogg), Heather Shea (Isla Vista), Yael Brennan (Mt. View), GUSD School Board member Yvonne DeGraw, Sue Bruns (Community Representative of Goleta Womens' Service Club), Jil W. Ronkainen (Ellwood), Felicia Roggero (Principal at Brandon), Bridget Lewin (Brandon), Tammy Merritt (La Patera), Ana Huynh La Patera parent, Karen Van Gool (Goleta Family School), Sandra Edgar (Hollister), Tammy Johnsen (Foothill), Michelle Hay (UTPG), Nancy Yokubaitis (UTPG).

- 2. Approval of amended minutes-unanimous.**

- 3. School Report by Felicia Roggero, Principal, Brandon School**

Felicia Roggero gave a presentation about Brandon's successful Math Family Night. More than fifty families attended this evening event that interactively began building an understanding of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for math and mathematical practices for families. The Brandon teachers were able to share new instructional strategies with the parents and students, and demonstrate the shifts in the classroom instruction through mini-lessons from the Number Talks and FactsWise curricula. Parents learned about Mental Math Strategies and the major strength of Number Talks, which is to increase collaborative discourse between students around math concepts and conceptual understanding. The evening events included a popular iPad station as well. The Dos Pueblos bilingual student volunteers were present and very helpful in both translating for parents as well as assisting with the use of iPads. Other schools were encouraged to use their services to benefit parents during school events. They are very friendly and extremely helpful! Overall, Brandon's Family Math Night was a success. Parent feedback was positive and many parents shared their own strategies in math, going back to their own learning in childhood. In addition, resources were shared to take home and continue with the mathematical practice. Everyone gained a greater understanding of the new math standards and the teaching strategies to support learning.

Felicia explained that one of the major shifts in CCSS math is to require of students a deeper understanding of concepts, so that they are doing algorithms based on their foundational understanding of number sense and mathematical concepts. There was a full discussion amongst the DAC members as to what this looks like in the classroom and how students are responding to this. The Brandon teachers are very positive about the changes. The staff ended the night with the sense of definitely wanting to do this again!

- 4. Superintendent William Banning's Report**

The learning associated with the new CCSS standards will go on for years. To this end, the district has three main initiatives related to the professional development of teachers. In math, teachers are receiving focused PD for FactsWise and Number Sense curricula. For the ELA curriculum, there is a focus on the Coherent Writing program. The district has two Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) that are available to all teachers in the district, one focusing on math and the other on ELA. Mr. Banning shared that although there are various stages of readiness in teachers, all teachers are positive about the changes toward Common Core State

Standards. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and TOSAs are intentionally moving forward with plans to assist teachers with CCSS. However, this is being done at an intentional pace that neither is too fast so as to overwhelm teachers, neither too slow so as to lose momentum. Mr. Banning made a special point of asking DAC members to express appreciation to site principals for all the work they are doing in this area.

5. School Council and PTA Reports

- Karen Van Gool (Goleta Family School)—looking forward to the upcoming Winter Sing with dinner, performance, basket raffle, crafts, Market Place, and family portraits.
- Tammy Johnsen (Foothill)—Community Friends Drive moving forward with the upcoming event to make up the baskets at Hollister School. They have had Michael Katz the previous two weeks to work with the 3rd and 4th grade classes. There has been tremendous enthusiasm, especially for reluctant readers. Mr. Katz begins his teaching with teaching values and being “mindful.” Can’t say enough about how great he is for the students.
- Chris Messner (Kellogg)—The Kellogg band will be in the Santa Barbara Holiday Parade. Kellogg is continuing with their recitals, scarf sales, and will have their Winter Sing in January.
- Jil Ronkainen (Ellwood)—Holiday Boutique next week with gifts displayed and pre-wrapped for \$1.50. This makes it possible for students to be able buy gifts for others and experience the joy of giving at an affordable price. Ellwood is appreciative of a donation of 20 iPads to the school, so now they have a total of 30, which makes for a whole class set. They have their Academic Chess with Evan afterschool program going and will have a Chess Tournament. In addition, the students are excited about the new program to learn how to code computers. This will happen grade by grade.
- Yvonne DeGraw (GUSD Board Member)—Explained code.org’s web-based goal to get 10,000,000 students to learn how to code within a one hour tutorial (<http://code.org/hourofcode>). It is supported by Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. Purpose of the organization is to make creating code as important as reading and arithmetic. GUSD Computer Specialists and principals have been given information about this. Anyone can access the website. Bill Banning shared that there is a movement to get coding in schools with new standards.
- Tammy Merritt and ELAC Representative (La Patera)—ELAC parents put on an inspirational “Dinner with ELAC” event with a carnival, food, and entertainment (several parents donated the food and entertainment). There were tickets sold for food. The goal was to raise \$500 and they ended up raising \$1200. Now they want to do more. ELAC members are now considering how to use the money they have raised. A useful strategy to allow participation from all families included the use of buses going into Old Town Goleta to pick up families—20 families took advantage of this service. A norteña band and UCSB dancers both donated their time. One mom, in particular, was mentioned as being an effective leader for this event. Since then, ELAC has met at the Boys/Girls Club and the meeting was well attended.

6. Strategic Plan Follow-up and Homework Review

Bill Banning expressed appreciation for the homework letters he has received from the DAC members. At the same time, he let everyone know that these letters are voluntary and most importantly each member is participating and contributing to meetings. However, it is helpful for him to hear from as many people as possible as he moves forward with making sure he is

representing as many voices as possible while creating the strategic plan. This way he can look for themes that resonate across interest groups.

Mr. Banning used a Strategic Plan graphic to show the relationship between the:

- Aspirational Vision Statement
- Tenets: Core values and beliefs
- Mission Statement
- Objectives (eg. Acquisition of 21st century skills, learning environment related)
- Strategies (Goals): Measurable movements
- Action Plans: Steps with a timeline
- Parameters on the outside: operational piece of how the plan works

Mr. Banning asked the committee to consider what we should be that we are not?

- What does our learning environment look like?
- What outcomes do our children have?
- What services are provided for our children?
- What are the characteristics of the students we want to exit our schools?

Some topics DAC members brought up included:

- It is important to be truly student-centered. Do what is best for the students and not always base actions on just financial decisions
- Consider what we can do to include more creativity into the school experience for our students
- How to address students' concern and discomfort about drills related to lock-downs
- Although differentiation is a district value, what is happening at the ground level, how is this being addressed?
- Find a way so that teachers can self select within the confines of their classroom for levels of autonomy (while still meeting standards)
- Time on the playground is a learning opportunity for social emotional growth in learning. Use this time in a more intentional way to structure team building, assist with girls and boys, and see this time as a constructive part of the students' day.
- Include more motion in the students' day
- Recognize what a science-rich community we live in and utilize these opportunities to build the science programs within schools. To best meet CCSS in ELA and math, it will be essential to also have a robust science program.
- There are so many great resources for schools, teachers, and students that not everyone knows about. TOSAs can help to identify these and share them with teachers (eg. SciTrek from UCSB, Scientist in Residence, etc.)
- It could be valuable to have electronic storage for access to GUSD resources and "great ideas"
- Recognize the fun in learning
- Take a closer look at the potential of afterschool programs and summer school

7. District Update and Upcoming Topics

Technology

The District received over 30 proposals from teachers for a Competitive Grant Process aimed at putting technology into classrooms. These grant proposals have also served to identify leaders in technology in the district. The idea was to use the limited tech funds by targeting it for teachers willing to submit a proposal.

For the district technology plan, the focus is to have the necessary infrastructure in place for the technology requirements for the new testing environment.

Transitional Kindergarten

The district will use the upcoming Kindergarten informational nights to inform parents about the TK plan for the district for next year. These meetings will likely happen in February.

Smarter Balanced Testing

This spring all California students will take one “Smarter Balanced” test instead of the STAR test: 90% of students will take a sample test with half math and half ELA questions; 5% of students will take only a math test; and 5% will take only an ELA test. There is an optimistic view of the tests, though there may be some bumps and corrections as it is rolled out. Scores will not be available for this year, as this year it is a test of the test itself.

8. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 9, 2013 at Ellwood School.