Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District

Committee of the Whole
333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room
2:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 21, 2014

Committee Members
Mr. Steven Zimmer, Chairperson
Ms. Mónica García
Mr. Bennett Kayser
Dr. George McKenna
Ms. Mónica Ratliff
Dr. Richard Vladovic

NOTES

The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairperson Steven Zimmer delivered brief opening remarks.

ELEVATING THE SCHOOL REPORT CARD FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR
RESOLUTION - STRATEGIC PLAN

Chairperson Zimmer introduced Dr. Cynthia Lim, Executive Director of the Office of Data and Accountability, and Ms. Rowena Lagrosa, Executive Director of the Parent Community Student Services Branch, to provide an update on the status of the School Report Card. Pursuant to the Board Resolution adopted on June 10, 2014 regarding the importance of the School Report Card, this report was to include an update on the process to integrate additional metrics. To be included were the CORE waiver changes and responses to the School Experience Survey. Also requested were how to publicize and utilize the data from the School Report Card, how to increase participation in the School Experience Survey in Spring 2015, and how to incorporate feedback from stakeholder groups.

Dr. Lim provided details on the additional metrics. She said, because of the CORE waiver, elements of the School Quality Improvement Index must be reflected in the School Report Card. These include indicators pointing to socio-emotional, culture and climate factors affecting students as well as academic data. More changes, though, may come in December 2014 from the CORE Board. Additionally, more items related to the socio-emotional, culture and climate items at the school and District levels were incorporated from the School Experience Survey. An example of a socio-emotional question on the School Experience Survey is for a student to give himself a self-rating, while the culture and climate factors may be related to bullying, cleanliness or safety at the school. Dr. Lim provided a snapshot of sample questions from the School
Experience Survey, which were divided into parts to allow responses from parents, students, and school staff, and how these are incorporated into the School Report Card.

Ms. Lagrosa noted that the School Report Card is first and foremost a tool to help increase parent engagement, and tie in all the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) priority areas. The School Report Card is being improved to make it something accessible and transparent. The School Experience Survey and the School Report Card can be valuable tools to collect data and share with all stakeholders, to form partnerships to best help the needs of the students.

According to Ms. Lagrosa, all school sites will be provided with a School Report Card Principal’s Toolkit as a step by step guide, which also includes a flier template to promote the School Report Card presentation, a scripted message for ConnectEd, a glossary of terms related to the School Report Card, a “Parent Pledge” to encourage parents to fill out the School Experience Survey, and suggestions for increasing participation in the School Experience Survey. All data from responses to the School Experience Survey will be printed in an “Infographic” for that school, and copies will be posted in the main offices and parent centers. Ms. Lagrosa showed a sample Infographic.

Timing is important as it relates to the publication and completion of surveys. Ms. Lagrosa suggested the roll-outs immediately follow Parent Conference Week. Working with the District’s Office of Communications is essential in order to create the right publicity campaign.

Dr. Lim and Ms. Lagrosa are hopeful that a school by school report may become available by mid-November 2014.

DISTRICT SUSPENSION OF PARENT TRIGGER LAW

Mr. Jefferson Crain, Executive Officer of the Board, stated, as allowed by the California Education Code, this item was placed on the meeting agenda as requested by former California State Senator Ms. Gloria Romero.

Ms. Romero said the “Parent Trigger” law, passed in 2010, was authored by her when she was in the State Senate. She learned only recently that several California school districts, including LAUSD, informed parent groups and parents that the Parent Trigger Law in their opinion is no longer available to use.

Ms. Romero advised the Board Members to reject the position of the LAUSD General Counsel and former Superintendent John Deasy that LAUSD is exempted from the Parent Trigger Law. According to her, other school districts still acknowledge the law and objects that LAUSD has pronounced itself as exempt. She suggested that Board Members open an inquiry or formal process on how this happened, who made the determination or authorization, and most importantly, the reason it was not made public.

Ms. Romero called attention to the Committee to a letter circulated by Ben Austin of Parent Revolution. The letter calls for continued support of the Parent Empowerment Act, or the Parent Trigger Law. Ms. Romero stated that parents are still involved in parent trigger petition drives and are not aware of this “exemption”. 

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Chairperson Zimmer assured Ms. Romero that the Committee acknowledges her requests and will submit a response from the Board.

UPDATE ON AB 86 - ADULT EDUCATION

The Office of Government Relations and the Division of Adult and Career Education presented an update on AB 86. AB 86 provides for $25 million in planning grants to consortia of adult schools and community colleges, to determine how to better serve the educational needs of adult education students.

Mr. Edgar Zazueta, Chief of Staff for External Affairs, indicated that funding for adult and career education is a priority for Superintendent Cortines. However, Mr. Zazueta understands that Board Members have tough budget decisions to make and this presentation about AB 86 might be helpful.

Mr. Zazueta introduced Deputy Director of Government Relations Leilani Aguinaldo-Yee who reported on the current state of adult education. Ms. Aguinaldo-Yee stated that State funding for K-12 adult education programs will be folded into the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). She said districts are required to maintain 2012-2013 spending levels for adult education in FY 2013-2014 and FY 2014-2015 and under AB 86, regional consortia, each composed of at least one community college and one school district, will be established in order to expand and enhance adult education, address existing gaps in programs and services, and remove any redundancies.

With regards to the consortium, the geographic boundaries will be defined by the community college. There will be one designated fiscal agent in each consortium. The grants will be distributed by the Chancellor’s Office to the consortia, and each consortium fiscal agent will distribute to the consortium members.

According to Ms. Donna Brashear, Executive Director of the LAUSD Division of Adult and Career Education, State funding under AB 86 will cover the following program areas; elementary and secondary basic skills, classes for immigrants such as ESL and citizenship, programs for adults with disabilities, short term Career and Technical Education programs, and programs for apprentices. Unfortunately, programs for older adults, high school programs such as credit recovery, and parenting and family literacy will not be funded. Based on the current adult education programs enrollment, LAUSD has about 107,000 students, and a budget of $93.6 million from the general fund and $12 million through federal grants.

LAUSD is part of the Los Angeles Regional Adult Education Consortium (LARAEC). Other members include the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), the fiscal agent of the consortium; Culver City Unified School District; Burbank Unified School District; and Montebello Unified School District. Ms. Brashear serves as a co-chair and primary contact for the State for LARAEC.

LARAEC has already completed a number of activities, including a symposium in February, joint ad hoc meetings between LAUSD and LACCD, key stakeholder interviews, a faculty and
staff survey, member districts program area meetings, and AB 86 legislative briefings. Based on feedback from these, resource and funding concerns and a clearer governance structure seem to be recurring concerns.

On March 1, 2015, all the regional consortia must submit a final plan for the ongoing coordination and integration of adult education. A statewide working group will review all plans and will develop new language for legislation to permanently fund adult education.

Adult education State funding for FY 2015-2016 is still unknown. However, the California Department of Finance has estimated $500 million as a possible amount. But given the consortia model, it is possible that LAUSD will not receive a sufficient amount to sustain the existing adult education programs.

Chairperson Zimmer called on speakers familiar with the Los Angeles consortium and adult education to provide their input.

Mr. Emilio Urioste, an administrator from Burbank Unified School District, said that he welcomed the opportunity to work with LAUSD as part of the consortia. He thanked Ms. Brashear for her leadership and looks forward to the discussions about identifying much needed resources.

Mr. Matthew Kogan, Chair for the Adult Education Committee of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), advocated for a close collaboration between UTLA and LAUSD, and encouraged the Committee to view AB 86 as an opportunity for leadership and to get input from local stakeholders. There is a need to work with legislators to inform them about the facts. Mr. Kogan also recommended working with the Chamber of Commerce for partnerships in training, and doing innovative collaboration with the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speakers addressed the Board about the subjects indicated:

Ms. Danielle Toscano  Special needs of her daughter Raquel
Ms. Maria Ortiz  School Experience Survey

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Materials related to an item on this Agenda distributed to the Board of Education are available for public inspection at: http://laschoolboard.org/10-21-14COW.