

From the Board Room ...

Notes from the Board of Education Meeting: 02/20/03

... informing all

L et's Celebrate !

What a wonderful treat to walk into Santa Monica City Council Chambers to find them bedecked with fanciful masks made by Core One and Two (K-3) students from Santa Monica Alternative School House. Principal Ruben Valles introduced art instructor, Abbey Horowitz, who explained that the masks were part of a broad intercultural experience aimed self-discovery. Conceptually differing from the common understanding of mask (something to hide behind), these students' masks were made to celebrate one intrinsic value they held for themselves – an appreciation of a specific color, an animal, whimsy, etc. The masks are vibrant examples of just how wide children's windows to the world can be. They will be on display in the Board Room until March 5. Students reading their own works were Kendall Thompson and Hanna Bellini. Kudos!

SMASH PTA Co-President, Barry Cassilly, spoke of his pride in being part of SMMUSD and of the unique, progressive programs SMASH provides, programs that undeniably deliver tools for building character and quality.

Institute for Learning:

District participants in the prestigious Institute for Learning (Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh) presented a broad overview of the program's first year successes. The three-year program, which is fully funded by the RGK Foundation, is designed to enhance leadership skills and to support an eventual, systematic dissemination of learned information to all teachers in the district. The training focuses on standards-based instruction and developing instructional models that promote increased academic rigor through the use of nine clearly

the voting block

February 20, 2003

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Board Meetings/ Date

The agenda was approved in a motion by Dr. Escarce, seconded by Ms. Brownley. Unless noticed here, the vote was 7-0.

A.21 - 6 Ayes, 0 Noes,

1 abstention:(Mr. de la Torre)

A.27.a.2 - 6 Ayes, 1 No

(Mrs. Leon-Vazquez) 0 abstentions

A.27.a.4 - 6 Ayes, 0 Noes,

1 Abstention: (Mr. de la Torre)

Item A.26 - tabled until 3/6/03
Copies of all documents are available
in the Office of the Superintendent

There was no report out from
Closed Session.

defined Principles of Learning. The three principles that were highlighted this year are: *Accountable Talk, Academic Rigor* and *Clear Expectations*. The demonstration included a PowerPoint presentation and videos of students and teachers immersed in the program. Presenters were principals Maureen Bradford, Patty Flynn, Lise Reilly, Pat Samarge and Ilene Straus and administrators Jarvis Pahl, Chris Rivera, Joe Quarles and John Deasy. Complete information about the program is available in the Office of Educational Services.

Public Speakers

43 speakers addressed the Board on a variety of matters that included renewal of the District's moratorium on interdistrict permits, budget cuts,

and specificity in saving certain programs or positions.

The Superintendent made a clear, strong statement that regrettable misinformation had been circulated regarding the ELD and Immersion Programs. Mr. Deasy emphatically stated that there are no plans to discontinue either program. He also stated that all district programs may expect having to accommodate larger class sizes because of severe funding shortage caused by drastically reduced State funding to education.

The Board approved all items geared at discontinuing or reducing particular kinds of services. It was noted that specifics relative to personnel would be brought before the Board at its next meeting in compliance with contract language.

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent deferred his report to Ralph Mechur, one of the co-chairs of the campaign for the new School Funding Initiative who provided an update on the committee's work. Regular updates will be given to the Board at future Board meetings.

SMMUSD Board of Education
Meetings in March:
6th - District Offices
19th District Offices (Wed)
1651 16th Street Santa Monica
7PM
All are welcome

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