



Minutes City Council's Education Partnership Committee January 26, 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Education Partnerships Committee held on Monday, January 26, 2009, 3:30 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Ben Arredondo, Chair
Councilmember Joel Navarro

City Staff Present:

Jennifer Adams, Pub Wrks Admin
Kim Hale, PD
Kate Hanley, TCC Exec Dir
Jan Hort, City Clerk
Adrienne Richwine, Dep Comm Svcs Mgr
Mark Richwine, Parks & Rec Mgr
Nikki Ripley, Media Relations Dir
Lynette Stonefeld, TCC, Communities in Schools
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Dir

Guests Present:

Steve Adolph, TUHSD Superintendent
Amanda Burke, ASU, Associate Director of the Office of University Initiatives
Sharon Doyle, TUHSD Foundation, TIE Foundation
Barbara Khalsa, Rio Salado Community College
Catherine Mayorga, Tempe Chamber of Commerce
Bill Munch, Tempe Elementary School District
Stephanie Salazar, ASU
Mike Matwick, Pinnacle Education
David Schauer, Superintendent, Kyrene Elementary School District
Art Tate, Superintendent, Tempe Elementary School District

Councilmember Arredondo called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., and everyone introduced themselves.

Agenda Item 1 – Tempe Elementary School District Strategic Planning

Dr. Art Tate summarized that the school board has been concerned about the long range look of the district for several years, primarily with demographics and falling enrollment. Two years ago, the district went to the public with briefings for a call for change to alert the public. At the time, they asked people to serve on a strategic committee and the district's strategic planning team was appointed and began meeting in April last year. The team is comprised of 28 people representing the middle schools, elementary schools, parents, teachers, administrators, community members and board members with three primary issues:

- Are all of the facilities needed?
- Should our schools be themed?
- Look at the communication plan.

That group met twenty times and developed conclusions and strategic recommendations to the board, as follows:

- Repurpose Evans Elementary School (the children would go to other schools in the district and another use will be determined for that school).
- Recommended possibility of repeating that next year if the economics continue to turn down.
- Recommended that each middle school region come up with a theme or strategic plan of their own.
- Start meeting now on the transportation issues.

He added that the planning team was very concerned about communication to the constituents and the wider community. They developed a communication plan and turned it over to the Marketing and Public Affairs Department. They, in turn, developed a detailed strategy. He summarized the progress as follows:

- As soon as it was apparent that recommendations would be made in the January timeframe, a flyer was sent to all parents in the entire district. At that time it was unknown which school might be recommended for repurposing.
- A notice was placed in the Tempe Town News in December.
- A notice was inserted into the water bill.
- Tempe Channel 11 was used in December to indicate forums.
- The day the team made their recommendations to the board, Dr. Tate talked to staff and letters were sent to parents.
- On January 9th a flyer was sent to all parents in the district.
- There was a Tempe Town News article about the recommendations on January 9th.
- Flyers were sent to the councilmembers, the three school boards, and the legislators after the recommendations were made.
- On January 15th, 1500 flyers were sent to the Evans square mile.
- Seven of eight public forums have been held, with the last one scheduled for tomorrow.
- On February 18th, the Board will consider the recommendation and they may make their decision that night.

Councilmember Navarro added that he receives questions about the amount of lead time when a letter is sent out.

Dr. Tate responded that in this case, the neighborhood residents received a week's lead time.

Councilmember Arredondo added that the constituents felt that was too short.

Dr. Tate added that the residents would like to keep an elementary school there and that their major concern is what it is going to become. That decision to repurpose the school won't be made on February 18th, and if they decide to repurpose it, a lengthy RFP process would be held and the community will be notified.

Kate Hanley asked Dr. Tate for the address of the Evans School and the criteria used to determine that Evans was the school that should be repurposed.

Dr. Tate responded that the school is off of College, to the north of Baseline, on Carter Street. A committee from the District Strategic Planning team developed the criteria. It included things like the capacity of the school, cost of

maintenance, recent money invested from the bond, number of open enrolled students, and the ease of transportation .

Ms. Hanley asked whether it involved the current numbers.

Dr. Tate responded that it is capacity vs. current numbers. Evans was about 60% capacity.

Councilmember Arredondo asked Dr. Tate to contact Shauna Warner so Council will know how to refer calls.

Agenda Item 2 – Discussion of School District's Communication with Community Regarding Changes in District

Councilmember Navarro stated that this has been discussed already. It is important to know what is going on so that calls can be handled properly. Concerning schools that are potentially slated to close or be repurposed, if that school area has a need for a school in the future, would the options still be there to re-open the school?

Dr. Tate responded that the district would never relinquish control of that school. That is why they are looking at options.

Councilmember Arredondo added that whether it is secondary or elementary, as long as those buildings are used for an educational purpose, no one should be upset.

Agenda Item 3 – Underage Drinking/Drug Use Planning

Lynette Stonfeld summarized that the City of Tempe was awarded a grant from Magellan Health Services which is actually behavioral health money from the State. Tempe was one of eleven original grantees and is the only city that applied and received these monies. All other applicants were local non-profits. The money is to be used to address underage drinking and drug abuse prevention. It says a lot about the City's ability to work in this area.

- Under the contract, the City is providing a program called "All Stars" in each of the Tempe middle schools and this year added the Kyrene Middle School as well.
- In order to continue those services, we are required to go through a strategic planning process. That piece of the contract was given to Tempe Community Council to strategic planning.
- A core committee of five people was engaged (not related to direct service prevention) and it included the president of the Chamber of Commerce, as well as local faith community representatives and other community leaders; a plan was developed.
- Magellan required certain representations. A call was put to the general public for anyone interested in participating and now there are 35 individuals that have been participating since October.
- After six months, the goal is to have a strategic plan in place for how this community will address underage drinking and drug abuse. That plan will then be presented to Magellan Health Services in the hopes of future funding to address what the community feels are the needs.
- It is data-driven so they are looking at all the data, including data from local police, the health services department, schools districts, and juvenile courts to determine the actual problem.
- Now half way through the process with a fully engaged committee and after three more meetings, the plan will be complete.

Ms. Stonefeld added that focus groups have been held in most of the high schools to gain the youth perspective. They currently have an online survey housed on their website to get additional information anonymously from youth. They are also hoping to use the information received, not only to get additional funding from Magellan, but also to inform other processes where they provide funding in the Tempe community. They have had discussions with the

Police, specifically about SACA money, about using the information they receive to help advise the funding of those dollars.

Councilmember Arredondo asked Ms. Stonefeld to determine if any of her staff has committed anything to the community colleges because we have the biggest enrollment at the Rio Salado Community College. Make sure the people know who the superintendents are so they can report back to them.

Agenda Item 4 – Discussion of City-Schools Communication Tools

Nikki Ripley presented a summary of current communication tools and noted that staff enjoys a good relationship with the school's public relations staff.

- The PR Coalition meets monthly to discuss upcoming issues and brainstorm.
- The city's monthly water bill newsletter, Tempe Today, is mailed to 40,000 households in Tempe and school news is frequently included.
- The City's website, tempe.gov, will be a big area in the next year or two when improvements will be underway. There will be room to include school information and there are plans for a page for new residents. There will also be an online newsroom, where anyone, including media, will be able to go for daily updates and community information.
- The Transportation Division works with the school districts to promote transportation-related events and opportunities. The free youth transit pass, Walk-to-School Day and Tempe Bike Month are programs and events which enjoy a high level of communication among the City, schools, and districts.
- Tempe includes a number of programs and public service announcements pertaining to students and schools. In addition, a "Bulletin Board" of current and upcoming events frequently features school and district happenings. TD3 Government Board meetings are aired three times a year.
- Full page ads for City news in the Wrangler News.

Councilmember Arredondo suggested the following opportunities:

- The City's federal and state lobbyist services could be shared. Amber Wakeman, the City's Government Relations Director, can be reached at 350-8824. He urged the superintendents to call her with any important needs.
- The City will be issuing an RFP for athletic fields and he urged the superintendents to talk to Mark Richwine about any ideas for suggestions to Council.
- The computers at the multigenerational centers are connected to the library. Due to the budget constraints, some of the library time will be shut down (possibly an hour off of each day). It might be time to look at charging residents less and non-residents more.
- He suggested a presentation by Carlos de Leon at the next meeting on how Orbit might be able to help the elementary schools, high schools, and charter schools.
- The Police Department will be receiving some SACA money and will be applying for a grant from the Native American community. It might be a good time to investigate using some of that money for the police school resource officers.
- About four years ago, he made a move to open the McClintock High School weight room early and late. He asked if consideration is being given to cut that out.

Mr. Adolph agreed that it is being considered.

Councilmember Arredondo stated that it is important to let the City know in advance as that is a very important opportunity in the summer. It means more to the community to keep those things going and enough money might be found to keep that open. He urged the superintendents to go back to their groups and develop a list of important

things they need help with, and then bring that list back to the committee. The committee needs to look at this before the budget is finalized.

Ms. Stonefeld added that Communities in Schools sends out RFPs to each of the school districts every other year, and they have received 19 applications. The Board will meet next week to begin reviewing those applications. She anticipates that 13 to 14 grants will be funded.

Sharon Doyle added that the Arts Jam is put on by the Arts Council For Youth which gets some of their support from the City of Tempe. She asked for Tempe 11 air time. The event will be on February 28th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Kiwanis Park and she will provide information to Nikki Ripley.

Ms. Stonefeld added that they have a new partnership with Child Protective Services and they have identified an area in Tempe that has an unusually high number of CPS referrals. They have partnered with Thew Elementary School, the Escalante Center, and a number of non-profit agencies to hold a community resource fair with the hopes of getting resources to families before they are in crisis. The resource fair will be on February 26th at Thew Elementary School from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Councilmember Arredondo also suggested sending a letter to Congressman Mitchell to specify where we need help in education so that he could then meet with the City's federal lobbyist.

Agenda Item 5 – Future Agenda Items – next meeting March 16, 2009

- Police and Fire staff will provide an update on areas of the City with high concentration of issues and places that might need resources for after school activities.
- Update on referrals from Juvenile Court (Lynette Stonefeld)
- Update on how the "First Things First" money (about \$5M) is being distributed
- Report on how Orbit might be able to help the schools

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Shauna Warner

Jan Hort
City Clerk