

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ALTA LOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT, COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO–WEDNESDAY, October 4, 2023

OPEN SESSION, CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The special meeting was called to order by Board President Brad Buller at 6:01 PM. Present were members Buller, Chung, Davies, and Martinez. Member Hurley arrived at 6:43 PM. Absent none.

PUBLIC COMMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Buller read aloud the Public Comment Announcement.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Mrs. Davies, seconded by Ms. Martinez and carried with the following vote to adopt the agenda of the meeting with the change to move Item F. Public Comment on Special Meeting Items to after Item G. General Obligation Bond Study Session.

AYES:	4 (Buller, Chung, Davies, Martinez)
NOES:	0
ABSENT:	1 (Hurley)
ABSTAIN:	0

GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND STUDY SESSION

Dr. Timothy McLarney from True North Research shared the results of the Baseline Bond Survey True North conducted. The purpose of the survey was to determine if a bond measure is feasible, identify how to create a measure consistent with community priorities and gather information needed for communications and outreach.

True North selected voters to take the survey by a stratified and clustered random sample of likely voters using age, gender, partisanship, household party type, and sub-geographies. Voters were recruited by personalized email, text, and telephone calls, voters were given PINs to restrict access and to ensure one complete survey per respondent. There were 411 completed interviews with an overall margin of error of plus or minus 4.8% at a 95% level of confidence.

Dr. McLarney shared the results of some of the questions in the survey. The conclusion was a bond does appear to be feasible for the 2024 ballot. Some positive signs from the survey were that voters ranked improving the quality of education in local schools as the most important issue facing the community, there is about a 64% support for bond measures, and all ballot tests are 55%, even after opposition arguments. Some challenges will be clarity around the tax rate extension, receptiveness to potential opposition arguments and some unknowns: trajectory of economy, inflation and other measures that could be on the ballot.

Dr. McLarney left the Board with some recommendations. Dr. McLarney stated, this is a snapshot in time, not a crystal ball, he believes the turnout will be higher for the District at the November 2024 Election. The project priorities are STEM, modern classrooms, facility repairs at the older schools to bring them up to code, removal of hazardous materials, instructional technology, safety and security. Most importantly, begin a conversation with the community to build awareness of facility needs and consensus on a bond proposal.

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Superintendent Smith and Associate Superintendent Hart reviewed the District's Long-Range Facilities Master Plan. They reminded the Board and the community that the plan was comprised of stakeholder's recommendations, desires and true needs of the school sites. The master plan is the big picture if the District is able to do everything the stakeholders recommended. There is a difference between desire and need.

With the Measure H funds, the District was able to complete many projects Districtwide. For example, upgraded the network infrastructure, phone system, keyless locking system, and elementary school playground equipment restoration and repair. Dr. Smith and Mr. Hart shared some before and after pictures of the schools that were modernized using the Measure H funds. Deer Canyon Elementary, Alta Loma Junior High School, Vineyard Junior High School, Victoria Groves Elementary, Jasper Elementary, Stork Elementary, Carnelian Elementary, and Hermosa Elementary School were all modernized with Measure H funds.

During modernization the District faced some challenges. One challenge was with the east side construction company. 2 east side schools cost \$30 million dollars to be modernized, where on the west side, 4 schools were able to be modernized for \$35 million. The Board had to make a difficult decision to switch construction management companies on the east side. COVID was another challenge the District had to face, due to COVID, construction costs increased 45% percent. Because cost was increasing the Board had to reevaluate, classrooms became the priority, they had to pause on some extras like furniture, roofing and HVAC if it could wait and pause on modernization for Alta Loma Elementary and Banyan Elementary School.

The 1999 Measure W Bond generated 25.8 million for the District. If the District goes out for a bond in November of 2024, at the same tax rate of \$30.00 per \$100,000 assessed value, it will now generate 71 million dollars for the District. Measure W would retire when the new general obligation bond would begin making it cost neutral, it's a tax extension. The new bond would modernize Alta Loma Elementary, and Banyan Elementary first and then it would allow for projects to be completed at the other eight schools.

The Board held a discussion and had some questions regarding the two presentations. These questions will be turned into FAQ's for the public. No action was taken by the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kurtis Downs, a member of the public had three questions for the Board.

The bond wouldn't be issued until 2026, correct?

Would the bond be able to be refinanced during its 25-year period?

Where does the money come from for the advertising of the bond?

Lilliana Doonan, a parent and member of the community shared her thoughts about the last bond that was passed and her disappoint to find out little was done at Alta Loma Elementary compared to other schools in the District. Ms. Doonan shared some of the facility needs at Alta Loma Elementary.

Jennifer Gruber, Alta Loma Elementary School PTA President, thanked the Board for the modernization that was done at Alta Loma Junior High. Mrs. Gruber asked the Board if the bond does not pass, what is the plan for the two sites that did not get modernization done?

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Jaimee Sakaoghli, parent, staff member, and member of the community, commented that she was a person that handed out flyers for the Measure H Bond. Mrs. Sakaoghli, suggested to make sure the community knows that it's not going to raise taxes, loved that it will help keep property values up and \$30.00 per \$100,000, really isn't that much a year. Mrs. Sakaoghli raised the question to the Board, Is it just going to be the two schools, or is it going to be spread out?

Luis Cetina, member of the community and former component of Measure H as a member of the Rancho Cucamonga Water District, he lent his name to the effort. Mr. Cetina firmly believes and supports that our schools are an asset to our communities, and our schools lend importance to the property values and our schools are critical, because they create the good citizens of tomorrow. Mr. Cetina is in favor of upgrading our schools and he is in favor of doing what we need to do to maintain the academics of Alta Loma School District. Mr. Cetina asked the Board if they would consider bringing this bond measure to the March 2024 Elections and not waiting for the November 2024 Elections.

Rita Hernandez Loof, member of the community and currently member of the San Bernardino Board of Education, San Bernardino County, Area 8. Expressed to the Board what she has heard from the community, she doesn't feel there is an appetite in this community for additional taxes. Ms. Loof does not support a bond in Alta Loma, and she doesn't think the community would support it as well. Ms. Loof shared that 40% of the state budget goes to education, California has one of the largest economies in the world, and she is not a component for more money for education, she is a component for money going to the student, and making sure the student is getting the money. Ms. Loof shared the District's 2022 Dashboard Report.

Dave Palmer, member of the community, appreciated the opportunity to share his perspective on the bond. Mr. Palmer shared that he is not in favor of bonds and expressed his opinions and concerns with a bond.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The date of the next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at the Alta Loma School District Support Center, 9390 Base Line Road. Closed Session will begin at 5:00 PM, followed by regular open session at 6:00 PM.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board adjourned to closed session at 7:44 PM for the purpose of discussing matters expressly authorized by Government Code Section 3549.1, 54956.9, 5496.9(d), 54957, and 54957.6.

OPEN SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

The Board reconvened to open session and made the following announcements.

Moved by Dr. Hurley, seconded by Ms. Martinez and carried with the following vote to appoint Eleanor Purdy, to the position of Dean of Students, Vineyard Junior High School

AYES:	5 (Buller, Chung, Davies, Hurley, Martinez)
NOES:	0
ABSENT:	0
ABSTAIN:	0

The Board adjourned the meeting at 8:25 PM.