

ENCINO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Notes from September 17, 2014

Los Encinos School, 17100 Ventura Boulevard

Present: Committee Members: Shelley Rivlin, Chair, Cecily Lerner (parent, Encino ES), Kathy Kantner (parent, Lanai) and David Hirsch (Principal, Hesby Oaks), Cheryl Gray-Sortino (Principal, Nestle), Jim Sterbinsky (teacher, Portola), Gurmet Khara (field deputy, Paul Koretz), David Azevedo (District Director, Tamar Galatzan). Guests: Annie Gilbertson, (education reporter, KPCC), Sari Rynew (retired teacher, Studio City). Committee members Victoria Miller and Caryle De Haven were absent.

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:09. Quorum present.
2. Introductions: Ilene Reinfeld, Head of School, Los Encinos School, provided an overview of the school and conducted members on a tour of their facilities.
3. Minutes of 05/17/14 were reviewed. Cecily Lerner made a motion to approve; Kathy Kantner seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved, no abstentions, no dissent. Notes from the meeting of 8/7/14 were also reviewed without additions or corrections.
4. Shelley requested volunteers for an ENCEC Ad Hoc Committee, which will be responsible for overseeing grant applications to ENC. Proposed Ad Hoc Members are: Carlye De Haven, Victoria Miller, Cecily Lerner, Shelley Rivlin. Ms. Khara is not sure if she can participate; there was a discussion about possible conflicts of interest.
 - Originally, the ENC designated a total of \$2,000 for grants, a lower amount than in prior years.
 - Shelley advocated for an increase; \$5,000 total is now being proposed, pending a vote to approve by the ENC.
 - Ad Hoc will create a timeline for the application. The money needs to be spent by April 15, 2015.
 - Teachers at schools can submit grant applications; more than one application per school is permitted.
5. Shelley asked about issues in our local schools. She noted that because of MiSiS problems, Norm Day had been pushed back, also the due date for grades at some secondary schools.
 - MiSiS? Impact on ES seems limited, manageable; secondary schools are seeing more problems. David Hirsch notes that Hesby (a K-8 span school) had problems issuing their 5 week progress reports, the system does not track vaccinations, and at the beginning of the year their census showed 4,000 students, however the system has corrected and census numbers are back to normal. Tamar Galatzan's office is investigating MiSiS; ENCEC looks forward to hearing the results.
 - iPad program? Encino parents and teachers anticipate receiving 1:1 devices and are excited and supportive. Hesby Oaks and Lanai will see further delays now that Phase 2 has been suspended. Kathy Kantner noted that parents at Lanai support the CCTP and at her middle school's Back to School Night a teacher who had been eagerly anticipating receiving the iPads expressed deep disappointment that the program was suspended indefinitely. Cheryl Gray-Sortino noted that Nestle parents hope to convert

an extra room into a computer lab; Nestle's technology is outdated and her school community supports an investment in technology for students. She feels that Dr. Deasy's CCTP originated from a good place, of wanting all students to benefit from access to technology, not only privileged students.

6. Annie Gilbertson presented on her work. She joined KPCC one year ago, and covers LAUSD exclusively.

- Annie has reported extensively on the LAUSD's iPad program -- the Common Core Technology Project (CCTP). Facts about this program are often mis-cited in the press; CCTP represented a \$1.3 Billion expenditure to be funded with bond money. Of this amount, \$500 Million was to fund the 1:1 devices (permitted one-time only, as bond money could be used for equipment in computer labs), \$800 Million was to fund upgrades to building infrastructure, wifi and broadband connectivity. She notes that a project of this scope is comparable to networking a city the size of Boston. Infrastructure additions/upgrades are projected to last 30 years.

- There have been many questions:

- . Why iPads? Rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach, later the program was amended so that schools could choose from six options; HS seem to prefer laptops;

- . The bidding process: was the lowest bid selected?

- . Pearson's curriculum was unfinished, and in fact wasn't required to be completed until the end of this year.

- . Was the bidding process fair and by the book? KPCC filed a public information claim and she and an intern sifted through 1,600 emails, whittled down to 100 referencing Pearson. These were shared with the LA Times and other media outlets.

- . Monica Ratliff formed a committee to look into the CCTP, her report was critical.

- . Superintendent Deasy denies wrongdoing; claims the earlier emails reference pilot programs, one of which never occurred. LAUSD General Counsel and the City Attorney's Office examined the bidding process and found no wrong-doing. However, in light of recent developments, the Office of the Inspector General is now re-evaluating the sequence of events.

- Members of the ENCEC commended Annie on her reporting. Information about major purchases funded with tax dollars should be subject to scrutiny, and procedures should be transparent and well communicated to the public. However, the issues are complex. Many people don't understand that bond money can't be used to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes. They note that schools seem to be in poor repair (bond money pays for materials but not the labor needed to make repairs; Maintenance and Operations workforce was reduced during the recession).

- Annie agrees that restrictions resulting from recent budget shortfalls were not Dr. Deasy's fault. She continues to report on the story. She spoke to Bernadette Lucas, CCTP Director, and learned that LAUSD general funds have been impacted; one pilot program came in over budget by \$10 M, and the overage came from the general fund. Also, technology support consultants are paid from the general fund. In fact, Annie reports that the budget has large placeholders -- one is \$450 M, or 6% of the District's

total budget - and this seems to be money intended for CCTP, consultants, etc.

Another \$400 M placeholder is for materials and supplies (not textbooks).

- Annie just received a report related to CCTP (see attachment).
 - ENCEC members expressed concerns about the sustainability of CCTP; bond funds will be exhausted, devices have a short shelf-life.
7. David Azevedo provided updates from Tamar Galatzan's office:
 - Tamar called for a MiSiS audit, to learn why it was rolled out so fast. David agrees to provide updates to the ENCEC as more information is available.
 - Tamar and David have been hearing from teachers and parents at schools impacted by the suspension of the CCTP -- many were expecting new devices this year, and are disappointed by the delays.
 - Tamar and David met recently with community groups, including members of the Chamber of Commerce here in the Valley; they support the CCTP, and feel strongly that it is urgent that LAUSD students learn technology and other 21st century skills so that they are eligible for good jobs, where technology skills are essential.
 8. Gurmet Khara discussed how Councilmember Paul Koretz's office supports local schools: Her email detailing her report is Attached.
 - With 3 9. Shelley read notes provided by Cara Schneider, Instructional Supervisor at ESC N (see attachment).
 10. There was a motion by Kathy Kantner to schedule the next meeting on Wednesday, October 29 at 4:30 p.m., location tbd; seconded by Cecily Lerner.
 11. There was a motion to adjourn by Kathy Kantner, seconded by Shelley Rivlin.
- Meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Kantner and Shelley Rivlin