

Santa Ana Unified School District  
1601 E. Chestnut Avenue  
Santa Ana, CA 92706

SANTA ANA BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**Special Study Session**

January 7, 2010

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting was called to order at 7:40 a.m. by President Yamagata-Noji. Also in attendance were Mr. Richardson, Mr. Hernández, Mr. Palacio, and Mr. Reyna.

Cabinet members present were Ms. Russo, Dr. Olsky, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Lopez, Mr. Mendez, Mr. Ayala, Ms. Lohnes, and Mr. Dixon.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Richardson.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Yamagata-Noji asked those members of the community who wished to address the Board to step forward.

There were no individuals wishing to speak.

**PRESENTATION - RACE TO THE TOP**

Superintendent Russo opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance to the special meeting. She outlined the discussions within the Race to the Top topic. At the end of the presentation, Board members were provided the opportunity to take action should they choose to move forward with the Race to the Top (RTTT) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), due to the State the next day. The purpose of this grant is to improve academic standards and assessments, expands the use of data to guide instruction, requires improvement at low-performing schools, and includes student achievement data in teacher and principal evaluation.

Dr. Olsky, Deputy Superintendent, then presented updated information to the Board. She stated that since the study session of December 18, 2009, nothing significant had changed regarding the grant. SAUSD has held meetings with constituents, Santa Ana Educators' Association (SAEA), and conference calls with State Superintendent O'Connell, State Board President Mitchell, Secretary of Education Thomas, and various Superintendents. Race to the Top is a \$4.35 billion competitive federal grant awarded to selected States as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and one-time money in a four-year period. If the SAUSD is selected it could receive between \$350-700 million (50% would be retained for State use and 50% awarded to eligible Title 1 and non-Title I districts) or \$58 to \$117 per pupil allocation in SAUSD.

Discussion ensued regarding participating districts and those that have chosen not to participate. Dr. Olsky stated that the SAUSD has been advocating much of what is expected of the grant and is honoring the negotiation process with SAEA.

A letter from County Counsel Ron Wenkart was discussed. The letter states that a contingency to the MOU may be added indicating the following: School district's signing of the California's RTTT participating Local Educational Agency MOU is contingent upon the governing board's approval to proceed with further participation in the Race to the Top process. It also states that school districts reserves the right to rescind its signing of the MOU at any time prior to further action by its governing board.

Board's direction regarding the MOU was requested. Superintendent Russo and Deputy Superintendent Olsky clarified the action item and addressed additional questions from the Board. A Board member stated that the grant parallels what the SAUSD is already doing with additional resources.

**ACTION ITEM**

**APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR RACE TO THE TOP GRANT PROJECT**

It was moved by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Hernández, and carried 5-0, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of California for the California Race to the Top grant project.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

FUTURE MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 6:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Jane A. Russo  
Secretary  
Santa Ana Board of Education