



School/City Liaison Committee

Summary Minutes

FINAL



School/City Liaison Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

8:15 AM to 9:30 AM
Palo Alto Unified School District Office
Conference Room A
25 Churchill Avenue
Palo Alto

In Attendance:

City of Palo Alto

Bern Beecham, City of Palo Alto
Kelly Morariu, City of Palo Alto
Sandy Hirsh, Library Advisory Commission
Valerie Stinger, Library Advisory Commission
Maya Spector, Palo Alto City Libraries
Diane Jennings, Palo Alto City Libraries

Palo Alto Unified School District

Barb Mitchell, Board Member
Mandy Lowell, Board Member
Kathy Durkin, Manager, Auxiliary Services
Marie Scigliano, Director of Education Technology

Handouts: All handouts can be viewed at 25 Churchill Ave.

City/School Library Update

Analysis of Strategies Related to City/School Partnerships

Meeting convened at 8:15 a.m.

Roll Call: Council Member Klein absent

1. Oral Communications: None

2. Approval of Minutes from February 28, 2007

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve. Mr. Beecham seconded. Minutes approved 2-0.

3. City/School Cooperation in Library Services:

Ms. Jennings handed out copies of the power point presentation concerning the City/School Library Update along with a handout on "Analysis of Strategies Related to City/School Partnerships." Ms. Jennings said a lot has happened since their last update which was a year ago. Ms. Jennings said Ms. Spector has coordinated library programs for the City and works closely with students, librarians, and teachers.

Ms. Jennings introduced Ms. Hirsh as the Chair of the Library Advisory Commission and said Ms. Hirsh will be presenting a very brief overview of the highlights and recommendations, focusing specifically on the highlights and recommendations on additional strategies to increase partnerships. Ms. Jennings said Ms. Scigliano has a few additional comments.

Ms. Spector said the projects that have continued are the outreach PTA programs. Ms. Spector said she and the librarian at Jordan were invited to do a database presentation to the Jordan PTA. They will also do Hoover, Addison and El Carmelo. They hope to be invited to visit the elementary schools to talk about the summer reading programs to encourage the kids to join their summer reading programs. Ms. Spector said they have continued their participation with the literacy program and are trying to get library cards for all the students. They had 400 new students.

Ms. Spector said with the library card campaign at the secondary schools, a registration form is required in the school packet for all incoming freshman. The first year the campaign was done it was very successful; they issued 372 library cards. The middle school discussion groups are continuing this year and expanding. Last year they did all three grades at Jordan and JLS and just 8th grade at Terman. This year they are doing all three grades at all high schools and middle schools and they are doing the JLS program where the kids meet and voluntarily read a book for extra credit and they are given pizza.

Ms. Spector said they are continuing their collaborations with professional development staff. She and Becky Convargas worked on two projects, one project is called loving your library involving the downtown library, and all of the Voluntary Transfer Program families and the District English Language Community with story time for the younger kids and for the parents. They had a presentation on online library services. The second project in collaboration with the PTA and also parents was "Reading Expert Jim Trelease" that 225 students attended. Ms. Spector said they also coordinated their first "Palo Alto Reads" program with the District and had Firoozeh Dumas visit Social Studies and English classes at Paly.

Ms. Spector said she is also involved in the new teacher training where she gives a presentation on library services. Ms. Spector said the upcoming activities are PACL, PTA Council and PAUSD program, National Library Week collaboration, and new projects with PAUSD Curriculum and Professional Development Staff.

Ms. Scigliano said the INET is a joint agreement with the District and the City. Ms. Scigliano explained that the INET is a fiber network that connects all schools. So far 3 schools, Jordan, Terman, and Escondido are connecting. Ms. Scigliano said the wiring and boxes at the District office and City Hall is all ready to go. For the next school year every other school district including Las Lomas, Ravenswood, Menlo schools, Menlo Atherton High schools will be connected. The advantages include sharing resources.

Ms. Scigliano said another project is "Silicon Valley Wireless" which is a regional wireless network that's being established, and the City will be performing a one mile test next month in the downtown area which also includes Palo Alto High School and Walter Hays. If all works well, it will be a wireless system that goes to Gilroy all the way up to Daly City. Ms. Scigliano said students and staff will have this network and will be able to connect and have access to many resources.

Ms. Scigliano said another is the Midpeninsula Media Center. It provides the District with training and technical support and is doing a great job of connecting us the other school districts.

Ms. Scigliano said the District has about 17 school libraries; most of them have been refurnished, remodeled, or given a little face lift in the last 3-4 years. There are 14 school librarians and every school has at least 4 days of library time. Some elementary schools have 5 days and secondary schools have their own school librarians. Ms. Scigliano said there are close to 250,000 books in our system, elementary schools have 25-30 books per child, middle schools have 20-25 per child, and the high schools, which is the target area, have 10 books per student.

Ms. Scigliano said the PAUSD operating budget for the library program is \$57,000. There aren't extensive budgets to continually refresh collections or increase staff time. Most of the collections come from donations.

Ms. Hirsh said in the library recommendations there were system upgrades and Mitchell Park improvement. Additional recommendations were to improve collections, improve library hours, improve library programs, and the library space

provided for them. Ms. Hirsh said in addition to these programs the Commission is also putting together a technology plan. Council encouraged the City and the District to work together. Ms. Hirsh said the LAC worked with the City and District to see how they could improve their partnership. It also looked into collections, technology, programs, services, staffing, library facilities, and looked into what recommendations it could forward to the City/School Liaison Committee to consider. Ms. Hirsh said some of the recommendations were to enhance the availability of text books, improve support for school curriculum, electronic resources, and technology enhancement by providing instant messenger and resources like tutor.com. Ms. Hirsh said another recommendation was to redesign library facilities to make more effective use of the libraries.

Ms. Lowell asked what is the use of print reference material vs. electronic? Ms. Jennings said they keep track of the use of electronic material but have not counted the use of print reference sources.

Ms. Spector said there are 35 online resources available at the libraries. Some of these are Rosetta Stone, Genealogy, Health, magazine articles, and historic New York Times.

Ms. Jennings said even though there are so many online resources, they have seen an increase on book checkout.

Mr. Beecham asked Ms. Hirsh, Ms. Scigliano, and Ms. Spector what would you most like to see improve and have us focus on? Ms. Hirsh said more staffing to work with the community, improve the facilities to meet the different needs, and continuing collections. Ms. Scigliano said she would like to see more access to students & families who don't have a computer or the ability to visit the library. The District has provided computers and is asking those families for \$15 for a DSL line.

Ms. Spector said improved facilities are needed so desperately: dedicated space for programs, more space for individual study, and computer labs. Ms. Spector said it would help to have another ½ time person to cover certain grade levels while she would cover the others; it would create life long library users.

Ms. Lowell asked if they could track the percentage of District students that have library cards. Ms. Spector said there isn't a way to just track PAUSD students.

Ms. Spector said the Library Advisory Commission has been working on Web 2.0 opportunities like instant messaging and finding ways to reach the students where they are.

Ms. Lowell asked Ms. Spector if there is a place where her power point presentation can be viewed. Ms. Spector said there is a link on the library web page under libraries and schools that will take you to the presentation. Ms. Lowell said she will also ask to have it placed on the PTA newsletter at the schools.

Ms. Scigliano said the Media Center and Channel 28 could be filled with information on libraries, training sessions, and all about the database.

Ms. Mitchell asked if there is a way to get the presentation/information out to the students rather than them coming to see the presentation? Ms. Spector said she feels that all the parents who had seen her presentation given at Jordan probably spoke about it to their children and the getting PTA and parent ed meetings to relay the information to the parents is the way.

Ms. Mitchell asked if it's possible to place a small blurb indicating where to view or find information on libraries on our databases? Ms. Jennings said what many libraries are doing is delivering information through email. Ms. Jennings said when an email address is received from a library card user, they are asked if they would like to receive more information on certain subjects and according to their requests, they are sent specific targeted information.

Ms. Lowell said the District has existing distribution systems that will get to the parents. Ms. Lowell said the single most likely source that the parents will read is their school newsletter. Ms. Jennings said they are aware of these resources and they do send certain press releases and information to them.

Mr. Beecham said he doesn't have much push to get us into joint facilities. Part of the reason is on the City side with more than usual distribution points, our limitations and with more facilities is more staff time. At this time there can be focus on more productive uses. Mr. Beecham said, for the schools, there are issues on access and security. He didn't see the need on the City side for more physical access and on the school side if there is benefit to having outsiders come in.

Ms. Lowell said the only issue, and one area that kept coming up, is that the elementary libraries are not open after school. She said she thinks progress has been made in the past years in setting up homework libraries and handing out text books. But the most frequently addressed issue was the lack of after school hours at elementary schools that preschool parents and regular parents could use where there are some parenting resources. Ms. Lowell said that she thought it was going to happen anytime when Children's was under construction because one might argue that there was a need for an alternative and the fact that it didn't, tells her that either there is not enough demand or logistical hurdles. She asked Ms. Jennings if that was her understanding or has she heard of that discussion?

Ms. Jennings said what she has heard in the past and the perception among some folks in the community is that the City didn't need to expand on our facilities if only the schools would take care of the kids after school. So, she said there was a need to acknowledge that it will be discussed and brought up again.

Mr. Beecham said the most economical way to resolve that is not to send resources out to multiple points at the schools but take fewer of those resources and make them available at more central locations.

Ms. Lowell said the issue is 12 elementary schools and are we going to staff 12 libraries after school, the answer is no. Are we going to place them in clusters and staff at 3 locations and at some point you start saying isn't it just easier to just have

Mitchell and Children's Library. The issue with that is school age library users were conflicting with adult library users.

Ms. Mitchell asked what more can we do for the libraries in terms of joint facilities?

Ms. Hirsh said one of the top needs indicated in the recent poll is to expand children reading areas in the City libraries and update facilities for the after school programs such as homework tutoring.

Ms. Scigliano said school collections are different from the City collections; they are designed for 2 things, for reading purposes and also designed for curriculum purposes. So, criticize that we don't check enough books out, it's because they need to be there for the kids to do their projects. Ms. Scigliano said just because the books are not checked out it doesn't mean there isn't circulation.

Mr. Beecham asked would there be any value to have certain City books made available? Ms. Spector said they don't have the space available and it would present some tracking and circulation issues.

Ms. Lowell asked Ms. Scigliano can you give a date when every school will be hooked up to the INET, not just the fiber stops at the sidewalks but usable at every school. Ms. Scigliano said she would say at the beginning of the next school year, August 28, 2007.

4. Future Meetings and Agenda Items:

Disaster Preparedness

Energy Management

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.