

Chino Valley Unified School District Board of Education
League of Women Voters of the Claremont Area Observer Report
By Observer Pauline Corse
May 11, 2017

Board members: Sylvia Orozco, President; Pamela Feix, Vice President; James Na, Clerk; Irene Hernandez-Blair and Andrew Cruz, Members.
Superintendent: Wayne M. Joseph.

Although there were two challengers in the November 2016 election, all three incumbents were re-elected, so Board personnel has not changed. Board continues to follow good meeting practices.

There has been no proselytizing or praying on the part of Board members; however, during several meetings members of the community used their three minutes of public comment time to pray. This practice stopped after a meeting at which one speaker thanked a Board member for inviting him. Many observers who heard this interpreted it as a violation of the court order that forbade prayers at Board meetings.

The Board has approved an 11-member Citizens Oversight Committee to supervise the \$750 million Measure G bond that narrowly passed in November. Bonds will be issued in increments over the next several years as building and renovation projects are determined. The first projects may include modernization of 11 schools, for which state funds may be available to cover 60 percent of the cost, and additions to Chino High and Preserve II High.

Oxford Preparatory Academy, a charter school that has operated within CVUSD since 2010, has been denied a renewal of its contract. An investigation by Fiscal Crisis & Management Team alleged that Sue Roche, the school's founder, had set up for-profit companies that funneled money into her own pocket through a management company named Edlighten. OPA appealed CVUSD's decision to both County and State boards of education, but as of this date Chino Valley's decision has been upheld. OPA has been one of the highest scoring schools in San Bernardino County. Superintendent Joseph called it an excellent school that "had lost its way." Final decision on OPA's contract will depend on another appeal that will be heard later this month, May 2017.

A second charter school, Sycamore Preparatory Academy, has been denied its petition to operate a school in the CVUSD because the "Charter petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the SPA Charter petition."

In September, stipends for Board members were increased by \$27.44 a month, making their compensation \$811.36. Earlier in the year, salary increases for teachers were increased by 3% and for other school employees by 3.5%.

CVUSD Board continues to recognize student accomplishments. Every meeting begins with a musical, artistic or dramatic performance by students. Outstanding teachers are also recognized.

At a recent meeting, a second grade student addressed the Board to request that homework be eliminated. After spending all day in school, he said, children need time to play. Every Board member praised this 7-year-old for his poise and logic, and assured him they would look into his request.