

## **Pomona Unified School District Board**

League of Women Voters of Mt. Baldy Area

Observer Report by Dr. Elizabeth Landerholm

September 2019-May 23, 2019

### **Description of Pomona Unified School District**

The Pomona United School District has 21 elementary schools, 5 K-8 schools, 4 middle schools, 8 high schools, and 3 other schools. The ethnic makeup is 86.54% Hispanic, 4.13% Afro-American, 0.19% American Indian, 3.39% Asian, 1.15% Filipino, 1.02% multiple, 0.15% Native Hawaiian, 0.41% declined to state.

The total of student enrollment for K-12 schools is 23,117 pupils.

Adult and Career enrollment is 2800. Child Development enrollment is 1919.

### **Members of the Pomona Unified School Board**

Current board members as of Dec. 2018: \*

President:	Frank Guzman
Vice President:	Adrienne Konigar-Macklin
Member:	Dr. Roberta A. Pearlman
Member:	Dr. Jason A. Rothman
Member:	Andrew S. Wong
Non-Voting Member:	Richard Martinez, Superintendent
Student member	

\*A new President and Vice President are elected each December.

### **Structure of the Board Meeting**

The school board meetings are held Wednesdays, depending on the school calendar.

The closed session begins at 5:00. The open session begins at 6:00pm. Agendas are available at every meeting and the public is invited to address the board. At every meeting special activities or honors for partner agencies, teachers, and students were presented. In addition, representatives of the California School Employees Association and of the Associated Pomona Teachers presented information about the progress of their collective bargaining. The meeting space was packed with parents, community supporters and union members at every meeting.

### **Highlights and General Impressions:**

#### **I. Student Honors and Special Programs:**

A wide range of student honors and special programs were presented to the board and community which gave the students an opportunity to be heard and valued for their work as well as gave the board the opportunity to see and hear the students. Some examples were:

A. The student honor guard presented the pledge of allegiance every board meeting and

- each student gave a short talk about their educational goals
- B. The high school student representative on the board had the opportunity to represent her high school peers' issues to the board.
  - C. The honors for attendance enabled the children to be honored by the board in front of their parents and the community and have their pictures taken.
  - D. The high school Film Group received a grant to go to Washington DC and were recognized in front of parents and community.
  - E. The high school girls CIF championship basketball team was recognized.
  - F. A PUSD high school band and cheerleaders had the opportunity to perform for the board, their parents, and the community.

## **II. Teacher Projects, Community Partnerships and Staff Reports**

A wide range of teacher projects, community partnerships and staff reports gave diverse groups an opportunity to be heard and valued for their work as well as the opportunity for the board to see and hear about the many wonderful programs that were going on in the Pomona Unified School District:

### **A. Teacher Honors and Community Collaboration**

1. The 2018 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Finalist Robyn Stankiewicz-Van Der Zanden, Teacher at La Verne Science and Technology Charter School.
2. Honoring 2018-2019 Pomona Unified School District Teacher of the Year: Adrienne Clay, ADC teacher, Vejar Elementary School.
3. Honoring University of La Verne President Dr. Lieberman for collaboration with PUSD on the new Health and Wellness Center.

### **B. Staff Reports**

Staff reports on various programs also included current and former students who had been involved in the program being presented to the board, their parents and community, about how they had been helped by the program.

1. Regional Occupational Program,
2. Positive Behavior Interventions and Support,
3. English Language Learners Program,
4. Stakeholder process of input to reallocate LCFF funds,
5. College career and attendance,
6. Silvia San Martin, Director of Elementary Education Curriculum presented the California Accountability and Continuous Improvement System,
7. Justice for Youth,
8. Participatory Budget for LCAP unspent funds.

## **III. Proclamations**

There were many proclamations of Awareness Days, Weeks, Months, which often increased the audience attendance at the board meeting.

### **A. Community Awareness**

1. Veterans Awareness Week
2. American Heart Month

3. Pomona Beautification Day
4. National Mental Health Month

B. Education and Teacher Awareness

1. Teacher Appreciation Week
2. California Day of the Teacher
3. Read Across America Day

#### **IV. Union Representatives**

The two unions were negotiating with PUSD during the months that I was observing. The representatives spoke at the meetings as well as union members and community members. The audience was packed with community members as well as union members and parents. A public hearing and approval of a tentative agreement with the California School Employees Association was presented at a special board meeting on April 24, 2019.

All in all, I was pleasantly surprised and impressed with the size of the audience each month. I started in September and attended 7 out of the 9 regular board meetings. At each board meeting, many audience members signed up to speak and gave their opinion and support for the program or issue being presented. There was clearly an atmosphere of willingness on the part of the board to encourage all parties to participate in the discussion about the issues facing education in general and PUSD in particular.