

United Educators of San Francisco

Assembly Meeting

Wednesday, October 16, 2002, 4:00 p.m.

Announcement

Sister Peggy Gash announced that it is not yet known whether the proficiency test for paraprofessionals will make up for the 60-unit requirement listed as part of Title I and the “No Child Left Behind” initiative. The requirements are not yet in place.

Minutes

Approval of Minutes.....Dennis Kelly
MSC without objection to approve the minutes of the Assembly Meeting of September 18, 2002.

The agenda was reconfigured so that President Mitchell could give a report about what has been transpiring at Thurgood Marshall High School since Friday, October 11.

Reports

1. President’s Report.....Kent Mitchell

On Friday, October 11, at Marshall High School, a series of events involving miscommunication, accidents and craziness coincided, creating a very dangerous situation. There was a fight midday in the hallway between two students. According to unofficial reports, one of the two SROs (School Resource Officers) at Marshall sent the wrong code, the riot code, to report the fight to the SFPD. At this time, the bell rang for passing period, and around the same time, someone pulled the fire alarm, a false alarm. There was confusion, with some teachers telling students to leave the building and other teachers telling students to stay inside. The police arrived, expecting a riot, and thereby seeing a riot. Some students and police were injured. A student allegedly got an officer’s baton, and the officer pulled a gun.

These events have compounded a long series of difficulties at Marshall, most notably two de-stabilizing events in the spring: 1) the reduction of units required to graduate from Marshall from 280 to 230, a result of the District’s intent to have one common graduation requirement throughout the District, and 2) the replacement of the principal. There were mixed reactions to this replacement. There has been a movement to have this principal, who has been struggling to maintain Burton’s program, dismissed.

The teaching staff had an all-day meeting on Tuesday, October 15, at Parkside. Juniors and seniors had some meetings at school with District social workers and psychologists.. Parents met with Elois Brooks, Arlene Ackerman, and the principal, who submitted her resignation. The faculty met with Ackerman this afternoon. The goals are to get people talking and to provide a safe environment for the students.

One of the lessons learned from the debacle at Marshall is that it is incumbent upon UBCs at all schools to make sure there are emergency and contingency plans in place. UBCs have the authority and obligation to push the issues of student safety and undesirable consequences with principals.

Currently, there are felony charges against a Marshall teacher who is accused of disruptive activity and interfering with the police. He was videotaping what was happening, and the police confiscated the camera and film. (The District has asked that the camera be returned, but it is being held as evidence.) He is on administrative leave with pay pending an investigation. There is also an internal District investigation to determine what is going on at Marshall, whether emergency procedures were known and whether they could be followed. There is an investigation into possible

police misconduct underway. Students, parents and teachers have to provide the District Attorney and police with any information or evidence they may have.

Also being discussed: the conduct of the SRO and the advantages and risks of having police on campus; the fact that whatever procedures were in place put students in harm's way; and the apparent lack of awareness on the part of the school administration about the gang-related and drug-related incidents that occur in the neighborhood surrounding Marshall.

Frank Tom, ISO for high schools, has taken over as principal of Marshall, with Jean Bell and Louis Garrett assisting. There seems to be a commitment from the community to help the school; fifty parents volunteered to be at Marshall when it reopens Thursday.

For the first time in awhile, there is a functioning UBC at Marshall. The faculty seems ready to move ahead, though there are still bad feelings and suspicion about last spring's events.

Brother Ken Tray pointed out that at the first high school meeting in September, concerns were raised about the many incidences of violence occurring at Marshall in particular and in high schools in general. Other members stated that the lack of a clear discipline policy and lack of follow-through are big problems. Issues that need to be addressed with the superintendent and administration include the importance of proactive measures and the necessity for Ackerman to go to sites and talk with the people who do the work; the counselor-to-student ratio; class size; and the fact that schools are judged based on the number of suspensions.

There should be discussions regarding discipline and emergency plans at schools and at grade committee meetings next week.

Substitutes play an important role and must be treated as professionals. They are needed during an emergency.

Resolution.....Dennis Kelly

UESF commends the Marshall High School community for coming together to address the concerns arising from the events on campus, and pledges the support of the teachers' and paraprofessionals' union to those resolutions which eliminate the problems and serve the educational best interests of the students, teachers, paraprofessionals and staff at that school.

MSC unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report.....Lily Gee Hickman

There was no budget report, but there was an update on the purchase of the building at 2310 Mason Street.

September 24: Escrow opened. UESF put down \$25,000. At this time, no one else can purchase the building.

During escrow, there is a period of due diligence, at which time UESF and the National Association of Letter Carriers can carry out investigations. So far, everything has checked out fine except for the furnaces and the presence of mildew and dry rot on the south side. These items are repairable.

Phase I environmental report indicates there are no minor, moderate or major hazards.

The title search is not complete.

The building is seismically sound.

October 30 or sooner, escrow will close. If we want to purchase, we will put down a non-refundable \$50,000.

Around November 14, the title will transfer. Hopefully, we can move in by the end of November, thereby not paying December's rent. UESF will move into the second floor in November. NALC will move into third floor in December. Contractors will begin with renovations on the fourth floor. Then, NALC will move to the fourth floor, and the contractor will work on the third floor. About three months later, UESF will move to the third floor, and work will continue on the second floor.

The architects will preselect some general contractors for bidding, with these requirements:

- union firm

- experience in San Francisco, North Beach; working with owners occupying the building; working in phases
- interest in project
- self- perform some of the work
- Size of firm should be such that our job will be about 15% of firm’s annual income.

3. Elections Report.....Steve Shapiro

October 21 is the deadline to register to vote. We were encouraged to get involved in campaigns of our endorsed Board of Education candidates. UESF will send out a mailer.

Proposition 47 for schools bonds was endorsed by CFT and CTA. We can do phone banking and distribute door hangers.

Proposition 49, the after-school care initiative sponsored by Arnold Schwarzenegger, was not endorsed by CFT and was endorsed by CTA. Sister Hene Kelly pointed out that there is no long-term funding source built in. Proposition 98 funds may be adversely affected, as may funding for schools and health care.

4. Vice President’s Report.....Rudi Faltus

a) The next SSC Summit will be at Lowell on Saturday, October 19, 9:00 a.m. to noon.

b) Thanks to the members who attended the UESF Leadership Conference. The issues regarding the 7-hour workday/35-hour workweek were discussed extensively, and will continue to be discussed by the grade level committees, particularly the Elementary Committee, and the Living Contract Committee.

c) In response to questions and suggestions from Sister Robin Brasso regarding compensation for SSC and Weighted Student Formula work, Sister Faltus suggested that now is the time to look at this matter, as adjustments to budgets arrive at sites.

d) The distribution, including the new *Educator*, will be in the schools starting tomorrow.

e) Issues raised at the start of the last Assembly meeting will be addressed throughout the year.

f) Reminder to attend reception for endorsed school Board candidates Dan Kelly, Eddie Chin and Danny Guillory on October 21.

5. Vice President’s Report, Paraprofessionals Division.....Peggy Gash

Sister Gash has ordered more AIDS pins, sold to support AIDS education and teachers in Africa.

Good of the Order

Again, for the third month, there is no Special Education meeting scheduled. The District is not fulfilling its special education obligations. At least two compliance complaints have been filed this year.

The May Assembly meeting minutes have not been distributed.

UESF members are encouraged to march under the UESF banner at the anti-war march on October 26. An announcement for this event is in tomorrow’s distribution.

The Counselors’ Committee will meet on November 13 at 4:30 at UESF.

The teachers who presented the issues regarding teachers who are still in the city retirement plan reminded the officers that they still want a list of teachers in the plan.

Burton High School, which now has a strong building representative and UBC, will be the site for the High School Committee meeting on October 23.