

Santa Cruz City Schools  
GREEN SCHOOLS COMMITTEE  
Meeting of 3/20/18

Minutes

Attendance at Meeting:

Ahmad Aziz, Harbor High SDC Recycle Club  
Mollie Behn, Coastal Watershed Canal  
Stu Branoff, Bay View Elementary Teacher  
Joanne Brown, AFE Teacher  
Keresha Durham, Branciforte Small School Teacher, GSCFT  
Patrick Gaffney, Asst. Supt., Business Services  
Bill Henry, Groundswell Coastal Ecology  
Gray Jameson, AFE Student  
Dan Lazarus, Santa Cruz County Parks  
Elnora Lewis, Harbor High SDC Teacher  
Jeremy Lin, Rancho Del Oso Docent  
Jessica Martinez-McKinny, Santa Cruz Water Dept.  
Heather Murphy, Science Coach  
Sheila Peck, Green Business Program  
Jeremy Shonick, SCCS Trustee  
Becky Steinbruner, AFE Parent  
Bria Steinbruner, AFE Student  
Tiffany Wise-West, SC City Climate Action Program

Call to Order

Asst. Superintendent Patrick Gaffney called the Green Schools Committee meeting to order at 6:30 pm. in the Harbor High Library.

Student Subcommittee Reports

Mass Transit Model – Gray Jameson

AFE Student Gray Jameson shared a video he had created which portrayed a future high speed rail system running from the Old Sash Mill to 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, parallel to Highway 17. He used the City Skylines game platform, imported a Santa Cruz map, and laid out buildings. His video showed people entering and exiting the train at stops as it ran along its tracks. Gray said that Santa Cruz used to have a light rail system, but it had washed out in 1940, never to be repaired. Now the rails only go to the retired Olympia quarry.

Harbor High SDC Recycling Club – Ahmad Aziz and Teacher Elnora Lewis

Ahmad Aziz, Harbor High SDC Recycle Club President, spoke about his efforts since his sophomore year to raise funds for the Club's scholarship. Ahmad collected cans and bottles from family and friends, as well as on campus. Teacher Elnora Lewis said that many Harbor students recycle, but the Club is just for SDC students. It teaches them a pathway to earn money, and to contribute to campus and community beautification.

### Heritage Garden Project at Branciforte Small Schools – Bria Steinbruner

AFE Senior Student Bria Steinbruner gave an update on the heritage garden project at Branciforte Small Schools. It will honor the history of Villa Branciforte. Bria had hoped to make a presentation to the Board, but the agenda was too full to allow it. Trustee Jeremy Shonick suggested that the public comment time at 6:30 offers the public three minutes to speak on any topic not on the agenda. Bria has met with the architects, and learned that due to the modernization projects planned to be done at Branciforte Small Schools, she will not be able to move forward with the garden project for a year. She was encouraged to continue conversations with the architects to incorporate her ideas into the modernization plans. Bria and Gray Jameson created a video on the project for the AFE Follywood festival. Teacher Keresha Durham commented what an improvement the current heritage garden is for the school.

### Bond Projects Concerns

Attendees had questions on the timing of bond projects. Asst. Supt. Pat Gaffney explained that this year has been focused on the design aspects of projects and lining up contractors. Lead time is required to initiate projects. Among the projects to be started soon are the Harbor High Athletic Fields Project, roofing at several sites and painting of the Santa Cruz High gym.

Another question was on the effects of inflation since the inception of project ideas. Construction costs have escalated, in some cases two times the original cost estimates. A record number of bond sales have resulted in a construction boom. Each site will revisit their lists of projects to prioritize.

Other questions were about whether outdoor spaces would be compromised by facility construction. Lifelab is an important part of the curriculum. It was noted that modernization should try to minimize the production of waste. It was noted that efforts to repair the staircase at Branciforte Small Schools entailed the use of glue which produced noxious fumes. Could this repair be done during the summer? Asst. Supt. Gaffney will check into this.

### Curriculum Update – Heather Murphy

Heather Murphy, Science Coach for SCCS, has been working with Amity Sandage, of CREEC, to plan how to best use funding received from the CA Dept. of Education. A professional development workshop is being planned for 6/11-6/15 to bring together teachers to develop lesson sequences by grade. There are 20 spots available for SCCS teachers (two from each school) and 10 for feeder districts. Teachers will be paid stipends through the grant. Science, history and careers will be woven together to implement the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), working with the Bay Sci curricula. The core principle will be to connect students to their environment. John Muir Laws, an artist, naturalist, author, and educator, will share his science illustration concepts. Heather urged interested teachers to apply without delay and to share the program with other educators.

Joanne Brown, AFE Teacher, spoke about how her students learned to observe deeply on field trips where they did science illustration work. Bill Henry of Groundswell talked about working with students at Gault Elementary School for the past in the Ocean Guardians Program, in which they worked on plantings at Seabright Beach to restore the native coastal habitat. Their efforts were integrated into the Lifelab program. Students start in the lab, visit the coast to observe, return to check on restoration. Metrics include observations of insects and birds. Heather encouraged teachers to weave field trip experiences into the core curriculum. It was noted that there are many passionate, knowledgeable people in Santa Cruz who could be connected with the schools, and that students teach their parents what they have learned.

### Jeremy Lin – California State Parks Field Trips

Jeremy Lin, California State Parks Program Coordinate, spoke about field trip opportunities at Rancho Del Oso – Big Basin Redwoods State Park. A three hour program is offered incorporating a hike with a focus chosen by the group's teacher. Biodiversity is easily appreciated at this park. Longer hikes to Bear Creek Falls and survival trainings may be appropriate for high school students. Joanne Brown of AFE commented that Jeremy had tailored her students' field trip to Rancho Del Oso to their particular needs. Some students are "nature deficient" and field trips are a great opportunity for them. Jeremy offered to work with Heather Murphy on the summer curricula workshops.

### Dan Lazarus –Quail Hollow Ranch

Park Interpreter Dan Lazarus spoke about field trip opportunities at Quail Hollow Ranch, where thirteen distinct habitats are available to explore. Field trips can study different ecosystems, as well as a historical homesteaders' house from the 1860's. Field trips last from two to four hours. Dan would like to collaborate with schools and teachers to build the curriculum. Summer camps are offered this summer. Public education programs are also available.

It was suggested that environmental bulletin boards could be set up at each site, especially at the elementary sites, to make opportunities like Quail Hollow Ranch known to the students.

### Sheila Peck – Green Business Program

Sheila Peck of the Santa Cruz High PTA, introduced herself as the new contact for the Santa Cruz County Green Business Program, which works to certify businesses, schools and nonprofits as green organizations. She expressed interest in getting SCHS certified as a Green School, and asked about the effect of modernization on that effort. She asked for information on the status of lights, etc.

Tiffany Wise-West of Santa Cruz Climate Action Program noted that a \$500 grant (first come, first served) is available to businesses in Santa Cruz to help with applying for the Green Business Certification Program. Stu Branoff stated that a supportive community, including a good custodian, made green certification possible at Bay View Elementary. Efforts at Mission Hill stalled out.

### Tiffany Wise-West – Santa Cruz Climate Action Program

Tiffany manages the SC Climate Action Program, which aims to help reduce emissions and to prepare for climate change. She spoke about a map for projected danger zones, and an ongoing effort to explore through community forums how we want Santa Cruz managed and about social vulnerability as it relates to climate danger zones. Her program is looking for a way to integrate these ideas into the classroom, perhaps through a virtual reality project to explore what things might look like, to educate and elicit feedback.

### Mollie Behn – Coastal Watershed Council

Mollie Behn described the Council's 24 week program, working with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders on how we rely on and use the San Lorenzo River, home to steelhead trout. Students, plan, investigate and create models. Mollie hopes to expand the program into more SCCS schools, and to design a community action program that can make a difference.

Along those lines, UCSC students will visit City Council on 5/8 to talk about the water catchment project they have been working on at Bay View Elementary through the DROPS program. It was suggested that the District's Board might consider having a study session this time next year on science and the integration of environmental programs at the schools.

### SCCS Projects – Pat Gaffney

At the last Board meeting, a proposal was approved to paint an ocean themed mural on the wall between Bay View Elementary and Mission Street. This is joint effort between the District, the City of Santa Cruz, the artist Taylor Reinhold and Clean Oceans Initiative, a group focused on the effects of plastic pollutions in the ocean. The mural will beautify the wall and communicate concerns. The artist will incorporate student input. Fundraising is ongoing for this project. There may be a mural painted on the inside of the wall as well.

Bond projects activities are ramping up. The first wave is planning. There will be a Groundbreaking ceremony on 5/23 to celebrate the Harbor High athletic fields project. Other projects soon to start include pools at Soquel High and Harbor High, roofing projects, and painting of the interior of the SCHS gym.

It was commented that LED lights in warmer colors don't disrupt circadian rhythms.

### Annual Report and Next Meeting

The annual report will be created from the meeting minutes of this year. A draft will be sent to members. This was the last meeting scheduled for 2017-18. A doodle pool will be sent out to identify a date for the next meeting.

### Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Meyer-Johnson  
Administrative Assistant  
Business Services

Patrick K. Gaffney  
Asst. Superintendent  
Business Services