

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
LA MESA-SPRING VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING: September 7, 2009

Revised

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Education Service Center by the President, Mrs. Halgren.

CALL TO ORDER

The President led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board members present: Baber, Duff, Halgren, Turner, Winet

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Board members absent: None

Staff members present on assignment: Bender, Marshall

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS

A copy of President Obama's speech

President Obama's speech

AGENDA

AGENDA

It was moved by Duff, seconded by Baber, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Approved as presented

HEARING SESSION

HEARING

The President announced a hearing for anyone who wished to address the Board on any topic relating to public education.

Kent Coston, Parent, Murdock Elementary/Spring Valley Middle, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

K. Coston, Parent, MUR/SVMS
Support for speech

Brianna Coston, Student, Steele Canyon High School, and former LMSV student, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

B. Coston, Student,
Steele Canyon High School
Support for speech

Lance Jones, Parent, Lemon Ave. Elementary, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

L. Jones, Parent, LEA
Support for speech

Edmond Piffard, Parent, Murdock Elementary/Spring Valley Middle, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

E. Piffard, Parent, MUR/SVMS
Support for speech

Leah Piffard, Parent, Murdock Elementary/Spring Valley Middle, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

L. Piffard, Parent, MUR/SVMS
Support for speech

Britt Mueller, Parent, Murdock Elementary, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

B. Mueller, Parent, MUR
Support for speech

Charlie Hamori, Parent, Murdock Elementary/Spring Valley Middle, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech

C. Hamori, Parent, MUR/SVM
Support for speech

Jay Steiger, Parent, Murdock Elementary, expressed support for airing President Obama's speech.

J. Steiger, Parent, MUR
Support for speech

The Superintendent read the following e-mail from Deyan Petakovich, Parent, Murdock Elementary, into the record:

D. Petakovich, Parent, MUR
Opposed to airing of speech

Dear Superintendent Marshall and Principal Ashley: It is our understanding that the La Mesa-Spring Valley School Board will have a Special Session today to discuss Barack Obama's televised address to school children September 8th. Regrettably, my wife and I will not attend this meeting which conflicts with our plans to be enjoyed with our children on this Labor Day.

We are dismayed that Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has referred to our decision as responsible parents to have our impressionable young child opt out as "silly." This type of irresponsible declaration by the Administration that they know what is better for our children than we do only serves as further living proof that deliberately undermines our parental authority. Please read aloud and enter this correspondence and the previous correspondence below into the record on our behalf at today's special session.

Dear Superintendent Marshall and Principal Ashley: Our son Nikola who will turn 5 this October is a newly enrolled kindergartener at Murdock elementary informed us at the dinner table that he did not have to finish his dinner because, "You're not the boss, Barack Obama is the boss." We are shocked that Nikola has already been indoctrinated to deliberately undermine our parental authority.

My wife and I require Nikola OPT OUT from watching Barack Obama's televised indoctrination to school children September 8th and that any further indoctrination activities including but not limited to discussions or assignments cease and desist immediately.

We insist that our son Nikola be provided with regularly approved curricular activities during the televised indoctrination or advise us if none will be provided so that we may remove him from school at such time.

Both my parents and wife were subject to identical indoctrination in the Communist nation of former Yugoslavia under the totalitarian oppression of the Communist Dictator Marshall Tito where school children were mandated to wear red scarves and sing in praise, "Comrade Tito, we pledge to you that we will not stray from the road you lead us to."

My family did not come to America so see our son and their grandson Nikola subject to same indoctrination and persona cult worship.

We have entrusted you with our precious son for you to "EDUCATE NOT INDOCTRINATE."

NEW BUSINESS

It was moved by Baber that: 1) The President's address to the school children of the United States will be shown in the classrooms of the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District. The exact time the speech will be shown is up to the discretion of the principal and teacher;

2) If a Special Education teacher, ESL teacher, physical education, music teacher, or any other teacher, with consultation of the principal, believes that the speech does not fit in with the education plan for his or her class, that teacher can elect not to show the speech during his or her class time.

3) No child will be forced to watch the speech. Every parent will be given the opportunity to opt out his/her children. The students who opt out will be given some appropriate alternative activity that fits with the teacher's scheduled study plan. If a student expresses that he/she does not want to watch it, even without a signed opt out slip, that child should be given the alternative activity.

4) LMSV will notify the parents that the speech is available online at the White House website, but we are not going to post the speech text or video on our LMSV website.

5) We encourage every parent to talk to their child about the speech and, if possible, watch it together at home in the evening with their child. Students with parents involved in their education are more likely to excel.

6) In the future, in situations like this, LMSV will strive to get parents and teachers the maximum amount of information ahead of time to allow them to plan for these types of events.

Motion died for lack of a second.

It was moved by Winet, seconded by Duff to not show Obama's address on Tuesday and take away school time, stop the planned curriculum, and post the address on the website for parents and students to view together.

There was discussion regarding this topic and the constitutionality and authority of the federal government to impose curriculum on local school districts.

The question was called for as follows:

Motion that Obama's speech not be shown in the classrooms of the LMSVSD and that it be posted on the District's website for parents to view with their children if they so desire. AYES: Duff, Winet; NOES: Baber, Halgren, Turner.

It was moved by Turner to show the President's address to the District's school children, working with the Superintendent, to work out the option with parents who don't want their children to see it, also giving teachers discretion in showing it at their convenience during the school day on Tuesday, September 8. Member Turner amended the motion by adding that classrooms in the LMSVSD will show the President's speech on September 8, with teachers providing a short dialogue after the speech to assist children in understanding, and the Dept. of Education materials will not be used.

NEW BUSINESS

Decision regarding LMSVSD's
Airing of President Obama's
Address to the Nation's
Schoolchildren
September 8, 2009

Motion died for lack of a second.

It was moved by Halgren and seconded by Winet to record the President's address and show it in classrooms as appropriate, the exact time to be at the discretion of the principal and teacher, not necessarily on Tuesday, September 8, allowing parents to opt their children out of the viewing.

Record address and show it in classrooms as appropriate, exact time at the discretion of principal & teacher, not on September 8, allowing parents to opt child out of viewing

President Halgren amended the motion to read that the address will not be shown on Tuesday, September 8 at all. Member Winet seconded the amendment. It was clarified that the address would not be posted on the District website, as families may view it at The White House website.

AYES: Duff, Halgren, Winet; NOES: Baber, Turner.

The Superintendent stated the District will record the video on Tuesday, September 8, to be shown on Wednesday, September 9 or after, as appropriate, in the classroom.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Brian Marshall, Secretary to the Board of Education

Approved and ordered into the proceedings of the District at the next regular meeting of the Board of Education to be held September 15, 2009.

Rick Winet, Clerk of the Board of Education