

PROJECT FORWARD

Bettering our community

Hermosa Beach Schools



Final Report:

Hermosa Beach City Council &
Hermosa Beach City School District School Board

June 30, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNCIL AND BOARD MEMBER SUMMARY	1
ORIGINAL MANDATE AND FORMATION OF PROJECT FORWARD.....	3
GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	4
SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS	8
<i>Peer Analysis & Performance.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Curriculum & Programs</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Communications.....</i>	<i>15</i>
EXHIBITS [IN ORDER]	
<i>Intentionally Omitted for Hardcopy Presentation.....</i>	

COUNCIL AND BOARD MEMBER SUMMARY

The Project Forward Committee (the "Committee" or "Project Forward") was formed by the Hermosa Beach City School District (the "District") and the Hermosa Beach City Council (the City.) The Committee was asked to examine matters related to K-8 Education in the city of Hermosa Beach and to develop a set of Guiding Principles for use by the District and the City.

With this broad mandate, the Committee needed a process to inform itself of the requests and wishes of the community. The Committee needed to become educated so as to derive meaningful findings and conclusions and be able to put forth meaningful, standing Guiding Principles.

PROCESS: The process for exploration was set forth was as follows:

1. Make basic premises ("Concepts for Moving Forward": Exhibit #1) about what education means to the community.
2. Form sub-committees to address various facets of education.
 - Curriculum and Programs
 - Finance
 - Peer Analysis and Performance
 - Communication
3. Gather information and input from the community. The Committee received input by conducting a town hall meeting, a questionnaire (Exhibit-#5), community participation in Committee meetings, written input, and discussions with neighbors.
4. Draft the principles based on analysis of the information / feedback from the community.
5. Provide a forum of debate for the Guiding Principles.
6. Final drafting and findings. Refine the Guiding Principles so they are concise and that the District and City may be able to manage to them.

While this process may have seemed laborious at times the final end product, the Guiding Principles, are of quality, are based in knowledge, and should be applicable for years to come.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

In the course of the process, several helpful by-products were realized by the Committee that can be used by the District and City within the future. These by-products include, but are not limited to:

ORIGINAL MANDATE AND FORMATION OF PROJECT FORWARD

The Project Forward committee (“the Committee”) was formed in November 2008 by the Hermosa Beach City School District (the “District”) and the Hermosa Beach City Council (“the City”). The Committee’s mandate was to examine matters related to K–8 Education in the city of Hermosa Beach and to develop a set of Guiding Principles for use by the District and the City.

The Committee had a defined “sunset clause” in which the Committee would present the Guiding Principles and findings on June 30, 2009, of which then the Committee would dissolve.

The committee consisted of 10 members, all City of Hermosa residents, jointly appointed by the District and the City. Five were appointed by the District and Five by the City.

Members were:

- John Sandoval—Chairperson
- Peter Barsuk—Communications Sub-Committee Chairperson
- Jeanine Bozeman
- Susan Darcy—Curriculum and Programs Sub-Committee Chairperson
- Susie Fraley
- Bruce Greenspon—Peer Analysis and Performance Sub-Committee Chairperson
- Linda Igo—Finance Sub-Committee Chairperson
- Joe Mark
- Lisa Newman
- George Schmeltzer

Advisory Members were:

- Patrick “Kit” Bobko—Hermosa Beach City Council, Mayor 2009.
- Barbara Zondiros—Hermosa Beach City School District Board Member

Additional, informal objectives of the Committee were to open channels of communication and engage the community in frank discussions about the state of education in the City of Hermosa and Hermosa Schools. Through this process the Committee could adequately be informed to recommend a set of Guiding Principles for the City and School Board to maintain and improve educational quality in Hermosa Beach.

Committee agendas and minutes of public meetings were posted publicly and are maintained with the City.

The Committee met its original mandate, as contained in this report and dissolved on June 30, 2009.

PROJECT FORWARD GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Project Forward committee was formed by the Hermosa Beach City School District (the "District") and the Hermosa Beach City Council (the "City"). The committee was asked to examine matters related to K – 8 Education in the city of Hermosa Beach and to develop a set of guiding principles for use by the District and the City.

The District and the City collectively share responsibility for educating our children. The District is responsible for providing an education that meets all State and Federal mandates as well as local requirements. The City is responsible for helping to provide a safe, secure, positive and supportive environment in which education can occur.

Good schools are not only good for our children. Good schools are good for our community.

On the basis of our findings, the Project Forward committee recommends the District and the City adopt the following eight guiding principles and goals as noted:

I. Transparency: The District and the City will conduct their business in a clear, open and transparent manner.

- The District will prepare an Executive Budget Summary (EBS) to meet local needs. The EBS will include current and forecasted years and it will identify all revenue sources and amounts, and all educational programs and costs in a simplified spreadsheet format. The 2009 / 2010 EBS will be delivered to the public in September 2009. Subsequent EBS's will be delivered concurrently with the annual budget.
- As part of the annual budget cycle the District will prepare and publish a 5 year budget projection, including capital improvements, using the best available enrollment, revenue and cost data projections in the out years.
- In the State of the City the Mayor will address the State of the District.

II. Communication: The District will establish and implement a clear and consistent communications policy.

- A. The District will publish its curriculum and current standards.
 - The District will develop a K – 8 curriculum map and publish it on the District's website.
- B. The District will prepare an annual State of the District presentation that will include an objective assessment of the status, comparative performance, costs, and benefits of receiving an education in Hermosa Beach.

- The District will conduct bi-annual town forums and invite members of the community to voice their opinions about District matters.
- Expand methods of communication to use shared media.
- The District will endeavor to provide regular communication to the community through the Easy Reader and Beach Reporter newspapers.

III. Cooperation: The District will endeavor to collaborate with the City, community, local community organizations, and nearby districts to share resources and programs.

- A. With the City: The City and the District will meet annually to identify areas of common interest, to collaborate on cost saving projects, programs and services, and to optimize the use of community resources including recreation programs, play fields and other facilities.
- The City and the District will prepare a Community Calendar jointly showing available programs, facilities, playing fields, and other resources.
- B. With other School Districts: The District will meet regularly with their counterparts in neighboring districts to identify areas of common interest, to collaborate on cost saving projects, programs and services and to optimize the use of resources and the delivery of education.
- C. With the Community: Facilities such as play fields, basketball courts, play structures, gymnasiums and other buildings will be open and available for public use to the greatest extent possible.
- D. With Community Organizations: The District will partner with community organizations to draw on their resources, support, and expertise.

IV. Accountability: The District and City are accountable for their actions.

- A. The District will institute an open evaluation process of its performance by administrators, staff, parents, students and the community, the results of which shall be publicly available.
- B. The District will continue to ensure that labor agreements reflect the District's desire to hire and retain the best qualified teachers, staff, and administration.
- C. Proceeds from taxes, levies, or bonds will be spent only for designated purposes. The District will prepare an annual report showing where all earmarked monies have been spent.
- D. The City recognizes that local schools are a valuable asset to the entire community.

VIII. Efficiency: The District will use all of its resources efficiently, including facilities, human, financial, and operational. Additionally, the District will implement policies to reduce, reuse and conserve.

- Prepare an energy cost reduction plan by 12/31/09.
- Initiate a feasibility study on upgrading North School to meet current State building standards by 6/20/10.
- The District will endeavor to utilize third party performance metrics to assess overall resource / energy efficiency and sustainability.