



Palisades Charter High School
15777 Bowdoin St., Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Tel: (310) 454-0611 Fax: (310) 454-6076
www.palihigh.org



**PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
Minutes of June 13, 2006 Meeting

OPEN SESSION

I. WELCOME

A. *Call to order – Minh Ha Ngo*

B. *Roll call – Minh Ha Ngo*

Members Present:

Ann Davenport
Patrice Fisher
Victoria Francis
Dick Held
Bud Kling
Gretchen Miller

Minh Ha Ngo
Mary Red Clay
Rene Rodman
Jim Suhr
Rosalind Wolf

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Gloria Martinez
Greg Wood

(Fisher, Held, Kling, and Miller left at 7:00 pm)

C. *Approval of Minutes*

Minutes from May 24, 2006 were approved unanimously with one abstention.
See final version of approved minutes on palihigh.org website. (Abstention:
Held)

II. PUBLIC SPEAKERS:

A. *Helene Kunkel (College Center Staff Member):*

Ms. Kunkel provided an update from the College Center. Seniors are turning in their Graduation Plan. She also gave statistics as to how many students are heading to UCs, Cal State universities, private colleges, and community colleges. Upcoming events include summer appointments with juniors, the college fair on October 11th, college corners for the classrooms and a writing coach for college essays.

III. ACTION ITEMS:

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MEETINGS STIPEND FOR CLASSIFIED STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS

The memorandum prepared by legal counsel to clarify the Board's commitment to provide meeting stipends to classified staff and administrators was approved with corrections (see corrected version). The stipend is for up to \$50 per month retroactive to July 2005. Also, the stipend will apply to all voting and ex-officio members of standing committees who are required to attend. Patrice Fisher suggested we offer all committee members the incentive. It would be more of a token of appreciation than an incentive. Jim Suhr stated that no one should be paid for their participation, but supported the motion since teachers receive the stipend as stated in the PCHS-UTLA contract.

⇒ **The Board approved the memorandum clarifying the Board's commitment to provide meeting stipends to classified staff and administrators.**

(YES = Fisher, Francis, Held, Kling, Miller, Ngo, Rodman, Suhr, ABSTENTION = Davenport, Red Clay, Wolf)

B. DISCUSSION AND ACTION TO APPROVE THE 06-07 BUDGET

Departments and programs submitted their requested budgets to the Budget and Finance Committee in four categories: IMA, Textbooks, Personnel, and Capital. The personnel requests were then forwarded to Human Resources and Capital and technology requests to Operations and Facilities Committees to review. Programs or requests that were not submitted in time to be vetted by the Budget and Finance Committee have separate proposals for the Board to consider. Otherwise, the committees prioritized and made its recommendations to the Board. If committees were given ballpark figures to work with it would have provided more guidance. It was also suggested that the budget approval process should start earlier, perhaps at the end of May instead of early June so that people can be notified before the closing of school. If the budget is approved, departments and programs will be notified by Monday, June 19th of their specific IMA and textbook budgets. Please note the ASB budget is separate and not included; it is independently audited and overseen by the Budget and Finance Committee. Mrs. Red Clay requested the breakdown of costs for line item 5810 - Services of Non-Instructional Consultants and 5800 – Services (Legal, Audit).

Proposed revisions to the proposed budget and its financial impact were:

- 1) Addition of two more steps in the salary scale for classified employees to advance (see proposal). This is a recommendation from both the Human Resources and Budget/Finance committees.

\$36,000 (already in proposed budget)

⇒ **Approved unanimously subject to negotiations with unions and what we are legally able to do with unrepresented staff.**

- 2) Approval of a Ninth Grade Seventh Class Program to require all incoming 9th graders who do not have all As and Bs to take a seventh class (see

proposal from Academic Watch). This recommendation was approved by the Educational Programming Committee.

\$190,000 (not in proposed budget)

⇒ **Approved unanimously.**

- 3) Proposal to hire a full-time school psychologist (instead of contracting through LAUSD) and a part-time district psychologist to handle special education testing.

\$85,000 + \$22,000 (\$85,000 already in proposed budget for LAUSD school psychologist contract)

⇒ **Unanimously referred to the Human Resources Committee for consideration first.**

- 4) Placeholder amount for new salaries so that the Human Resources Committee can have more time to vet the personnel requests. They will also evaluate if one-year positions should continue. The “continuing” figures are already in the budget, the new salaries are not.

\$440,000 + \$44,500 (\$452,000 not in proposed budget)

⇒ **Approved unanimously. The Human Resources Committee will meet and make their recommendations to the Board for final approval of new salaried positions.**

- 5) Placeholder amount for new classroom bungalows and other capital expenses to be recommended by the Technology Committee, Operations and Facilities Committee, and Facilities Task Force.

\$300,000 Technology (in proposed budget)

\$60,000 Furniture/Equipment (in proposed budget)

\$350,000 New classrooms and furnishings (in proposed budget)

\$100,000 Facilities planning/consultants (in proposed budget)

\$250,000 Building Improvements and Capital (in proposed budget)

⇒ **Approved unanimously (by members still present: Davenport, Francis, Ngo, Red Clay, Rodman, Suhr, Wolf)**

⇒ **A task force of Charlotte Atlas, Rick Mills, Marilyn Haese, Gloria Martinez, Mary Red Clay, and Vicky Francis will explore where the new Executive Director’s office should be.**

⇒ **The 06-07 Budget as revised was approved unanimously by members still present (Davenport, Francis, Ngo, Red Clay, Rodman, Suhr, Wolf). The revised budget will be presented for approval of the full Board at the next meeting.**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

MEMORANDUM

From: Minh Ha Ngo, Board Chair, Palisades Charter High School ("PCHS")
Board of Directors

To: Classified Employees and Administrators Serving on PCHS Committees

Date: June 6, 2006

Subject: Compensation for Committee Member Participation at PCHS Committee Meetings

At its meeting of May 16, 2006 the PCHS Board voted to approve a stipend in the amount of up to \$50.00 per month retroactive to July 1, 2005 to be provided to classified employees and administrators who serve on PCHS standing committees (either as a voting member or ex officio member) when such employees attend committee meetings.

By way of clarification, should such committee meetings occur during the regular workday, classified employees and administrators shall coordinate their attendance at such meetings with their supervisor to ensure appropriate coverage of work responsibilities. Further, attendance at such meetings will not necessarily require the employee to work overtime in any given day. All overtime must be cleared in advance by the employee's supervisor.

Should any such committee meetings occur after a classified employee's or administrator's workday, such committee meetings are not deemed required, and do not constitute work to be performed by the classified employee or administrator for PCHS. Accordingly, attendance at such committee meetings after the workday for classified employees and administrators shall not constitute a basis for submission of claims for overtime pay.

I hope this clarifies the Board's action and expected protocols concerning this matter. However, should you have any questions concerning these issues, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you.

**PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
2006-2007 BUDGET SUMMARY
DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

CBO's GOAL OF BUDGET MEETING:

Provide Board with the latest Projections on the 2005-2006 School Year

Obtain Board Approval of an overall 2006-2007 PCHS Budget to send to the CDE

Provide guidance to stakeholders of PCHS on budgetary direction

REVENUE

- State of California May 2006 Revise Budget was utilized to calculate Revenue Estimates
- ADA and Enrollment estimated at 2,520 & 2,672 respectively for the entire School (Based upon ADA % of 94.3 for 2005-2006)
- Similar Integration Funding (TIIG) estimated for 2006-2007 as in 2005-2006

EXPENSES

- Salaries included in 2006-2007 Budget are all considered to be continuing from 2005-2006
- Salary increases estimated at 4.5% for 2006-2007 with step increases for some staff adding another 0.5% (Total of 5.0% Salary added)
- Although New Salaries have been added to lines on the Recommended 2006-2007 Budget, **no Individual Position determination has been made** (exception for Board Recommended or Pre-Approved Amounts). The lines that the salary has been reported are placeholders only (Based upon Budget & Finance Recommendation)!
- Retirement Rates (PERS) have been published and rate changes have minor impact to the 2006-2007 Budget
- Payroll Tax Rates Assumed to be unchanged in 2006-2007 Year
- Insurance Rate Estimates are from PCHS Insurance Broker (Down in 2006-2007)

- Medical/Retirement Rates from LAUSD have not been received. Used 8% increase from 2005-2006 levels
- IMA/Textbook Budgets from Budget & Finance Committee Meetings
- Most Operating Expenses Budgeted at 2-5% Increases Based upon Current Years Projections
- Capital Expenses recommended have taken into consideration the reviews performed by the Operations, Technology & Facilities Task Force and PCHS goal of Class Size Reduction. As is the case of the Salaries section of the budget, the Board should consider whether amounts used in 2006-2007 Budget is sufficient to address the needs of PCHS on an overall basis. Specific Project Approvals are not required for the Budget
- LAUSD Expenses are based upon MOU's with the district for services rendered. Estimates have been provided for Facilities staff for 2006-2007. No other estimates have been provided by LAUSD as of June 1, 2006. Estimates made for 2006-2007.

2005-2006 Highlights:

Revenue

- ADA Higher than Budgeted by approx. 38. Revenue Increase of Approx. \$250,000
 - TIIG Funding resolved favorably with LAUSD resulted in increase of \$380,000 in funding
- Total Revenue Increase of \$617,000

Expenses

- Salaries Budgeted 2005-2006 were before Contracts were finalized. Salaries Added approx. \$400,000
- Benefits lower than budget due to lower STRS rate than budgeted- \$170,000
- Lower Workers Comp Rate due to no injuries-\$120,000
- Unspent Books & Supplies Budget-Approx. \$125,000
- Other Operating Expenses- Very Close to Budget on an Overall basis

- Capital under Budget in: Bldg. Improvements \$75,000 & Equipment Replacement Areas \$55,000- Total Under Budget=\$140,000
- LAUSD Charges Basically on Budget for 2005-2006, Subject to their full-year charges

Net Result of Operations for 2005-2006 is a Projected increase in the Fund Reserve for 2005-2006 of \$679,000. If projection is correct, Cumulative Fund Reserve Balance would be approx. \$3,058,000

2006-2007 Budget Process

Positives

- Process Started Earlier than 2004-2005 (end of February 2006)
- More Departments Involved in the review process: Human Resources, Operations/Technology, Facilities Task Force & Budget & Finance
- Increased Response to Requests for Budgets-Over 15 New Department/Program Requests were made in 2006-2007 (an Increase of 40%)
- Budget Requests were more thought out than in prior years

Process Improvements Needed

- Process is more complex than most people think, more time is needed to vet/ consider requests
- More collaboration between Committees with potential joint meetings needed
- Input and Direction to Committees from Executive Director & Board of Directors on Educational/Operational Priorities

Overall Summary

PCHS continues to improve the Budget process from prior years. Our budget is more inclusive of any charter budget in

Palisades Charter High School							
DRAFT of Step Increases							
2006-2008							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
School Administrative Assistant	16.75	17.72	18.70	19.78	20.90	22.05	23.29
Office Clerk*	11.79	12.43	13.15	13.86	14.65	15.46	16.31
Office Assistant* \$14.06	12.43	13.15	13.86	14.55	15.48	16.35	17.27
Senior Office Assistant*	14.65	15.48	16.36	17.27	18.25	19.26	20.31
Special Ed. Trainee	15.09	15.91	16.82	17.77	18.79	19.82	20.91
Special Ed. Assistant	16.82	17.77	18.80	19.83	20.94	22.09	23.31
Campus Aide \$11.44/11.60	11.82	12.45	13.16	13.90	14.66	15.46	16.31
Classroom Aide T/A	11.44	12.74	13.44	14.18	14.96	15.79	16.66
College Center Clerk 1 **			27.82	27.82	27.82	27.82	27.82
College Center Clerk 2 **			17.12	17.12	17.12	17.12	17.12
Tutoring Coordinator			22.38	23.61	24.91	26.28	27.72
Senior ASB Financial Manager*	24.49	25.87	27.32	28.85	30.44	32.12	33.89
Programs Coordinator ***			25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
Cafeteria Helper	0.00	10.53	10.90	11.55	12.19	12.86	13.57
Cafeteria Worker I	10.39	10.96	11.55	12.23	12.91	13.62	14.37
Cafeteria Worker III	11.55	12.24	12.92	13.64	14.39	15.18	16.02
Cafeteria Clerk	12.84	13.56	14.33	15.13	15.99	16.87	17.79
SIS Computer Coordinator/H.R.			28.93	30.52	32.20	33.97	35.84
Financial Administrator			28.05	29.59	31.22	32.94	34.75
School Accounting Clerk*	16.97	17.90	18.92	20.03	21.12	22.28	23.51
Technology Technician			26.00	27.43	28.94	30.53	32.21
Proposed Additional Steps	** College Center rate is on an as needed basis						
	*** Programs Coordinator rate is a contracted rate and is renewed each year						
Not on scale							

NINTH GRADE PROGRAM: SEVENTH CLASS PERIOD

RATIONALE FOR THE PROGRAM: The goal of the ninth grade, seventh class program is to provide a safety net or system of support for incoming ninth graders. As expressed in the WASC Visiting Committee report, Palisades Charter High School (PCHS) needs to address the following schoolwide critical areas:

- Address the high dropout rate among 9th graders
- Investigate alternative instructional programs in core subjects with significant achievement gaps (i.e., English 9 and Algebra I)
- Reduce the achievement gap among all students, especially out-of-area transfers

WHO WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately four hundred ninth graders will participate in the fall semester of 2006. Ninth grade students who have ALL As and Bs from their last report card from their middle school will be exempt from the program. Students who receive additional academic support from classes such as RSP, SDC, AVID, MESA or the Reading Connections class will not be included in the group of 400, but may be placed in a seventh class period.

WHAT IS THE RATIO OF TEACHERS TO STUDENTS?

We have about 14 teachers signed up to teach the classes. We would like to have 16 teachers participate to bring the teacher/student ratio to 1:25. Smaller class size is essential to provide the proper attention to each student's academic progress.

WHEN WILL THE CLASSES MEET?

The program will take place on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The seventh period class will not meet on Tuesdays so it does not interfere with the development of PLCs. The class will be programmed into the student's regular schedule and start the first week of school.

WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS WHO ARE PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS DURING SEVENTH PERIOD?

Six classes of the ninth grade program will be scheduled during the regular school day. We will schedule 6 classes during the regular block schedule and 10 classes during seventh period.

WHAT WILL THE PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

The design of the course is based on a “directed study” format. Students will have days to work on class work from their regular schedule with tutorial support provided by AVID trained tutors. Summer hours have been requested for 5 teachers to collaborate on writing the actual ninth grade curriculum. The purpose of the class is to provide support to students to successfully complete their high school experience, especially this ninth grade transitional year. The teachers will also be advisors to check on meeting high school and UC/Cal State requirements. Teachers will also be responsible for communicating progress to parents via Teleparent. Another point of the program is to include parents in the support system of each student, similar to the Student Success Team (SST) process but on a larger scale.

WHAT WILL THE CURRICULUM INCLUDE?

The curriculum will be written for each day. It will stress organizational skills, study skills, monitoring grade reports, communicating with parents via Teleparent, SAT Prep skills and tutorial support. We would like speakers of various professions to speak to students about college and career choices in the future. School counselors will also be asked to speak to students about high school and college requirements.

Pieces of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) curriculum will be imbedded into the program as well as SAT preparation material. The following is a sample of the curriculum (See separate attachment):

Teach and Practice Cornell Lecture and Cornell Textbook Notes

Teach and Practice Dialectical Reading Journals for interesting and boring texts

Socratic Seminars for texts from the 9th grade POD curriculum

Teach Goal Setting - Set goals for life, end of high school, end of year, end of semester, monthly, weekly and daily goals. Reinforce daily

Reflect on grades at each grading period (We have a form that Jeanne Saiza did

for this that includes goals and requirements for improvement/sustaining)

Time management project that looks at how time is spent and how to make effective use of time. Includes following a schedule written in class for

at least a week (AVID students do two weeks) and keeping a daily journal at home. They should have journal checked daily, reflecting on how well they followed their schedule, why or why not, and how it felt)

Philosophical Chairs could be used for friendly debate on hot topics related to school. We did one on the question "Does Pali High's crack down on minor offenses such as tardies and staying in boundaries have

a positive or negative affect on the academic environment on campus?"

WILL STUDENTS RECEIVE GRADES?

Students will receive a pass/fail mark and they will receive 5 elective credits.

WHAT ABOUT BUSES?

The bus schedules will be adjusted to accommodate the schedule for the new ninth grade program. Some buses will be moved from the 2:03 schedule to the 3:08 schedule to meet the increased need. We have already spoken to Mr. Brown who is in charge of transportation.

IS THIS A YEAR-LONG COURSE?

Students who receive a GPA of 3.0 or higher and no D's or F's will move out of the program the second semester. Students who do not meet that standard will continue in the program the second semester. Students will receive the above information at the beginning of the program as an incentive for students to achieve academically.

WHAT ABOUT THE BUDGET FOR THIS PROGRAM?

The following has been requested: \$200,000.00

Instructional materials: \$2,000.00 for curriculum notebooks and paper for the semester
\$1,000.00 Weekly Progress Forms (Part of Pyramid of Interventions for the entire school)

Textbook requirements: \$4,800.00 for high interest reading books and/or SAT Prep workbooks in Language Arts and Math

Technology and furniture requests: \$2,750.00 for 16 free-standing white boards and printer cartridges

Personnel needs: \$139,450.00 for 16 teachers first semester and 8 - 16 teachers second semester depending on the number in need. An additional \$20,000.00 for AVID tutoring hours are included for the year

Other expenditures: \$30,000.00 Summer hours for 5 teachers to research, create and plan the curriculum and additional summer hours to train the 16 teachers

To: The Human Resources Committee
PCHS Board of Directors
From: Bella McGowan, M.Ed.
School Psychologist
Palisades Charter High School
May 1, 2006

Proposal: Conversion of my district position to PCHS full time counseling psychologist

The job of the school psychologist at a large, urban, and diverse 2700+ student populated high school is multifaceted and complex. Best practices for school psychologist-to-student ratio is 1:1500. Prior to August 1996, when I assumed the full-time position of school psychologist at PCHS, the job was part-time. I have held this position for a decade. My clinical preparation and prior experience was extensive. Now after ten years of direct service to students, staff and parents, I have a perspective that I would like to share and a direction I feel strongly PCHS should pursue.

Over the years I have concluded that the responsibilities of the on-site psychologist should be divided into two positions. One, a full-time school psychologist position directly employed by PCHS to assume the daily counseling/crisis intervention needs, dedicated time to group work for students at-risk, teacher in-services, a community liaison for support services, special projects on campus, and parent education. The second position would be a part-time school psychologist (district or individually contracted), who would meet the school's testing needs and support the present students currently in our special education programs. Both roles are critical and necessary to address the increased demands of our sophisticated parent body and our socially, emotionally and educationally challenged students. Traditionally we have met the school's problems as they arise, instead of positioning ourselves to be proactive, visionary and offering opportunities for our entire school community to learn valuable problem solving skills to be used in times of a crisis.

With these strong convictions in mind, I submitted (July 2003) a proposal to the Independent Charter (Principal, Linda Hosford) and to LAUSD Psychological Services (Coordinator, Diane Kloosterman) to work at PCHS full-time as a counseling school psychologist with additional (1-day a week) psychological testing support from the district. The proposal was accepted. During the 2003-2004 school year, PCHS successfully benefited from the combined expertise of two school psychologists, who collaborated to provide direct services to students. This was the beginning of a new vision for increased psychological support services at the high school.

In July 2004, both the leadership at PCHS and the configuration of LAUSD Psychological Services changed. John Pero, the current Coordinator of Central West Psychological Services LAUSD, denied renewal of the counseling psychologist proposal.

During the last two school years of independent charter status, I resumed full-time responsibility for the academic, social, and emotional needs of PCHS, a **district** position that is 100% purchased by Pali. (Please see the attached detailed job description that was developed for our recent WASC review.) Sadly, the needs of students, staff and parents at PCHS have increased exponentially while the psychological services for the school have remained stagnant. An obvious example of this increased need was the aftermath of a tragic and unforeseen suicide of one of our students in December, 2004. Since

Sharon's death, there has been a substantial increase in students referring themselves and their friends for suicide ideation, as well as self mutilation, drug abuse, drinking, depression, and overall extreme risk-taking behavior. Parent calls, voicing concern for the safety and emotional well being of their children, have also increased dramatically. Staff referrals for students who are suicidal, depressed, sad, unmotivated and in-crisis are also on the rise, as well as staff seeking support.

This school year, in response to the increase in these social/emotional needs I have developed three groups for students at-risk: a grief group (for students with significant personal losses), the teen empowerment program (a discussion format for adolescent issues), and Clarity for Youth group (in conjunction with the Claire Foundation for substance abuse issues). All students on campus have access to these groups, which now encompass over sixty students weekly and growing. I have made myself and my position on campus widely known in a series of workshops presented to the entire student body this past year.

With a full-time PCHS counseling school psychologist position, I would be able to further strengthen our existing counseling programs, expand support services school-wide, add a staff relations and parent education component, and advocate school wide for the healthy well being of our adolescents. Additional programs that could be considered are anger management, peer mediation, stress management, and mentoring between faculty and students. Monitoring at risk students by using a case management approach should be a top priority, as well as expanding and improving our crisis intervention team. There is a great need for students and teachers to work in collaboration and embrace a social/emotional curriculum; one that reflects the school's social climate both in preparation and in immediate response to crisis situations. Our two-day forum on suicide prevention presented in December (2004) to all students, as a result of Sharon's death, is one example. An ongoing speakers' forum on relevant adolescent issues and/or monthly seminars (e.g. self mutilation, date rape, eating disorders, depression, domestic violence, etc.), should be the standard, not the exception. I would like PCHS to be proactive, not reactive. I would also welcome the opportunity to improve staff relations, and increase professionalism and mutual respect on campus.

However, my ability to implement these much needed programs is limited by the increased demand for testing, which I believe could be accomplished by a part-time position. Psychological support services rely on relationships built on trust and open communication, as well as building consensus and working with collaborative teams. Imagine a staff position on campus devoted to these ideals.

As a California Distinguished School, PCHS will continue to strive toward excellence with a full-time counseling school psychologist and a part time school psychologist for testing. It is my hope that you will recognize in this proposal the commitment to my work in the past, and vision I hold for the future. It is also my sincere hope that you will understand the passionate feelings and experience I possess for the position I am advocating.

Thank you for your consideration.

PCHS SHOULD RETAIN A FULL-TIME COUNSELING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

- During a decade of service as the PCHS full-time School Psychologist I have created a second job of equal or greater importance on campus
- The nature, scope and depth of ongoing counseling services presently available on campus is not representative of other public high schools and currently is not typical of LAUSD schools; westside private and parochial schools have multiple positions for counseling psychologists with the typical ratio of 1:300; SMHS currently employs three psychologists, most high schools have additional support services
- Dramatic rise in referrals over the past several years as a result of Columbine shootings and recognition of school safety issues; this has prompted increased awareness and sensitivity of journal writing, drawings and personal statements made by students and their friends and there is substantial increase in referrals from concerned teachers
- Teen suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents, heightened awareness of suicidal ideation and increased numbers of students at risk since the death of Sharon Mendez (12/04); during the week of May 8-12 we had five students who were seriously suicidal
- The entire student body was exposed to a school-wide assembly on suicide prevention (12/04) and school resources for emotional support (12/05) which has heightened the awareness for students that the School Psychologist is available with an open door policy every day, there is an increase of students who self refer and also refer their friends anonymously because they are worried about them
- The presence of a therapy dog, well publicized now that PCHS has written a school policy to have him on campus, encourages students to visit the psychologist's office
- The creation of supportive counseling groups on campus to meet the myriad of social and emotional needs of students (grief, teen empowerment, substance abuse) currently encompasses over 80 students summoned out of class on a weekly basis; these continue to rise in number
- Mounting stress, peer relationship issues, family discord, anxiety, eating disorders, depression, loss, behavioral problems, failing grades, change of attitude, crying, inattentive, sleeping in class – teachers send students to the School Psychologist on a daily basis at any time of the school day to be comforted and to problem solve
- Crisis intervention is always available however it is time consuming; students identified with a serious issue often have multiple sessions with the School Psychologist and look for ongoing support
- Increase in students with significant loss of family members; current School Psychologist is trained as a grief counselor
- Increase in number of students with significant behavioral problems and behavior support plans; current School Psychologist is a behavioral interventionist
- Previous experience establishing a program to mentor colleagues in LAUSD psychological services regarding job dissatisfaction and related stress issues; recognize the need to address staff relations and create a mentoring program for new teachers
- Need to expand existing counseling programs to meet the growing social/emotional needs of students and offer monthly speakers forum on relevant adolescent issues
- Need to offer parenting programs and expand community resources
- Current School Psychologist has extensive clinical experience and a ten year record of providing compassionate support and confidentiality to both students and school staff
- Current School Psychologist is on the Executive Board of Directors of Teen Line, a suicide hotline at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; also participates on the Westside Council of School Psychologists and St. John's Child Trauma Council and has participated on several cable problems dealing with depression and adolescents

PCHS SHOULD HIRE A PART-TIME SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST FOR TESTING

- Prior to 1996 School Psychologist was a half-time **district** position
- Since 1996 School Psychologist has been a 'purchased' full time **district** position
- Testing, whether for present PCHS students and/or residents within our school boundaries and whether this is a LAUSD or PCHS position will always be under the mandate of the **district**
- Special education at PCHS is tied to the LAUSD/SELPA; special education is mandated by law and is strictly overseen by the **district**
- PCHS pays for a full-time School Psychologist position BUT it also pays for **district time** (off campus) that amounts to approximately 25+ days a school year; this includes 8-10 days for monthly staff meetings, 3 days for mandated in-services and case management meetings and conferences, 1 day a month for record keeping of initial, 3-yr and 2nd annual logs, ED cases, MAA surveys, special requests of coordinator and weekly record keeping of DIS counseling students
- Federal law and **district** mandates for special education stipulates strict adherence to a 50-day calendar to complete all assessments and IEP's once an assessment plan is signed, to maintain compliance; new **district** policy guidelines for Emotionally Disturbed students
- Testing has increased, the number of students with IEP's and special needs has increased, special education teachers and classrooms have increased, students with severe needs (1-1 aides, behavioral support plans) has increased, sophistication of parents with litigious advocates and lawyers has increased, and overall there is an increase in special education awareness, due process issues, and 504 plan implementation
- PCHS has always been a high profile Westside school with the most difficult special education cases, and highly visible within the **district** as well as the state
- There is an increased awareness of IEP protocol and attention to detail to avoid costly errors, an increased amount of time spent on IEP's in a hostile environment with tape recorders, transcripts reviewed and additional IEP addendums held at the discretion of the parents and advocates, and there are increased demands for Non-Public School placements
- **Special Education and testing at PCHS, either contracted from the district or contracted individually can be accomplished in a timely manner by a part-time position, 2-3 days a week with an open commitment for scheduling IEP's**

The School Psychologist's Role

In recognition of the increased need for social/emotional/academic support for all students, in the 1996-97 school year, the position of the School Psychologist became full-time. Our present School Psychologist has been with Palisades Charter High School for the past ten years. In a large urban school with a diverse student population of approximately 2700 students and 150 faculty and staff members, the School Psychologist assumes responsibility for the emotional support and well being of all students and adults on campus. At any time the job encompasses: crisis intervention counseling for students and staff, ongoing counseling support of students for school/family/personal issues, consultation to the faculty to promote successful learning strategies and classroom accommodations, consultation with parents regarding their students, consultation with community agencies, participation in Student Success Team meetings, and participation as a Crisis Team member. In support of the growing numbers of students experiencing difficulty at school, there are three ongoing groups that meet weekly to provide relief, comfort, and self advocacy and problem solving skills. Students have access to The Grief Group (dealing with significant issues of loss), The Teen Empowerment Group (discussing relevant and topical adolescent issues) and the newly formed Clarity for Youth Group (targeting at-risk students with substance abuse issues). Referrals for these groups and for generalized counseling come from parents, the faculty, the nurse, the dean's office, the counseling office, the attendance office, the college office, as well as students who refer themselves and send their friends. An open door policy is maintained as well as strict adherence to confidentiality.

A significant part of the School Psychologist's job also encompasses meeting the needs of special education students which includes identification and initial evaluation of new students, and comprehensive psychoeducational reviews of students already in special education. Meeting special education needs is defined as serving current PCHS students and students living within our school boundaries but attending private schools. This includes report writing, consultation with staff and outside agencies, and attendance at Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meetings. In addition, the School Psychologist provides ongoing weekly Designated Instructional Services (DIS) to special education students identified for counseling support on their IEP's. This population includes Autistic, Emotionally Disturbed, Specific Learning Disabled, Other Health Impaired and Multiply Handicapped students. The School Psychologist is a behavioral specialist who also consults with teachers regarding optimal functioning in the classroom for special education students and helps in the development of Behavior Support Plans.