

**CITY OF PARAMOUNT
MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL/SCHOOL BOARD AD HOC COMMITTEE
August 7, 2025**

Clearwater Building Auditorium
16401 Paramount Blvd, Paramount, CA 90723

CALL TO ORDER: City Manager John Moreno called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PUSD Board Members Present:
Alicia Anderson, Board President

City Council Members Present:
Isabel Aguayo, Councilmember
Vilma Cuellar Stallings, Councilmember

PUSD Staff Members Present:
Johua Lightle, Superintendent
Isela Preciado, Senior Executive Assistant

City Staff Present:
John Moreno, City Manager
Grissel Chavez, Assistant City Manager
Yecenia Guillen, Community Services Director
Pauline Jauregui, Comms & Engmt. Mgr.
Gaby Paredes, Executive Assistant

Absent:
Diane J. Martinez, Board Member

Public Present:
Daisy Macedo, PTA President

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Board President Anderson and seconded by Councilmember Aguayo to approve the City Council/School Board Ad Hoc Committee minutes of April 3, 2025.

The June 12, 2025, City Council/School Board Ad Hoc Committee minutes are to be approved at the next scheduled meeting of September 4, 2025, because the Committee members present did not attend the June 12th meeting.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. PEP Scholarship – Data Research Project City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Communications & Engagement Manager Jauregui gave the report.

Communications & Engagement Manager Jauregui provided an overview of the PEP Scholarship Data Research Project, which aims to reach out to former PEP recipients from 2009 to the present. The goal is to complete a survey measuring the positive impact of the scholarship program. Despite outreach efforts, including emails, letters, and phone calls to approximately 600 recipients, only 30 to 40 responses have been received. The City requested assistance from the School District to help contact these former recipients by involving school principals, assistant principals, and Board Members, as many alumni return to visit their former teachers and Board Members. The School District agreed to review data privacy requirements before providing contact information from scholarship applications to support this outreach effort.

2. Proposed Change to PEP Recognition Event City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Community Services Director Guillen gave the report.

Community Services Director Guillen discussed a proposal to revamp the annual PEP donor recognition event due to declining attendance in recent years. Despite this drop in turnout, financial contributions from donors have remained strong, indicating that donors are more motivated by the cause than the event itself. The original Friday evening dinner format in June is no longer effective, and the event has become resource-intensive. Based on feedback from the PEP Board and donors, a new approach is being considered: holding the event earlier in the year (March or April), on a

weekday evening (such as 4–6 p.m.), with a more casual, social format that includes appetizers and drinks. The new format aims to thank donors and invite new businesses to learn about the PEP scholarship program. Committee members supported the proposed pivot and emphasized the importance of including school district staff, principals, and commissioners to restore community-wide participation. The group agreed that changing the timing, improving outreach, and refocusing on relationship-building with donors and partners would likely reinvigorate the event. Feedback will be taken back to the PEP board at its September meeting.

3. Annual Back to School Event

City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Community Services Director Guillen gave the report.

Community Services Director Guillen provided details about the City's annual Back to School event, which will take place on Saturday from 12 to 2:30 p.m. at the Paramount Park Community Center. This event will serve 500 registered families, with early registration prioritized for approximately 100 homeless and foster families before it opens to the general community. This year, the event has been moved to the afternoon to improve attendance; however, since Saturdays are the busiest days for barbers and stylists, making it difficult for them to volunteer their services, the City is considering moving the event to a Sunday next year. Volunteers and donors have been essential in making the event possible, with contributions from local businesses and individuals like Board President Anderson, including free haircuts, school supplies, uniforms, food, and community support. The event does not require reservations, as past efforts showed they were ineffective. It will now operate on a first-come, first-served basis, with vouchers available for families who can't be helped on-site.

4. Update on STAR/ELOP City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Community Services Director Guillen gave the report.

Community Services Director Guillen reported on the transition of the City's STAR After School program to Think Together after 19 years of City operation. Think Together has been generous in hiring former City staff, including a 16-year employee who has secured full-time employment with improved pay and benefits. The City will continue to offer support through September and October to meet state reporting requirements and ensure fiscal compliance. Parents who have questions about the program change are being directed to Think Together, and the transition has been well-received overall. The hope is that once families see familiar faces in new uniforms, they will feel the same sense of trust and comfort.

5. School Route Safety City Manager Moreno introduced the item and gave the report.

City Manager Moreno discussed the City's annual preparations for school safety, which include inspecting and repairing sidewalks within a one-block radius of all 12 campuses within the City limits to eliminate tripping hazards. Additionally, a "Safe Walking" class was recently held to educate parents and students on safety measures; however, attendance was low, possibly due to it being scheduled during the week. There was a suggestion to expand the Safe Walking class to multiple locations throughout the City, such as Mokler School, a high-traffic area, and potentially involve input from school principals to identify schools with the highest number of walkers, instead of only considering the current route from the Sheriff's Station to Lincoln School. The City is also launching its annual parking enforcement campaign near schools. During the first week, deputies and Community Service Officers (CSOs) will issue warnings for parking violations near campuses, then begin citing violations in the second week for infractions such as double parking, blocking crosswalks or intersections, and parking in red zones.

6. Comments from
Committee Members

Board President Anderson shared that the first day back to school began with a successful and well-attended convocation at the district office, thanking Superintendent Lightle and Sr. Executive Assistant Preciado for organizing it, and expressed pride in the students' participation at the City's Heritage Festival despite the heat and late afternoon timing, noting it had a great turnout.

Councilmember Cuellar Stallings expressed joy at seeing increased family attendance at the Heritage Festival, with families walking to the event rather than driving, creating positive community engagement in the neighborhood. Pride in Paramount High School's participation in a Metro internship program for juniors and seniors was also shared, emphasizing that this program can lead to college opportunities and future employment with Metro.

Councilmember Aguayo highlighted the strong collaboration between the School District and the City, noting that families now view them as a unified team rather than separate entities, based on positive feedback she has received from community members, and expressed excitement for the new school year.

7. Comments from Staff

City Manager Moreno shared that a community meeting with parents and PTA groups is proposed to be scheduled for October and requested that it be added to the next City Council and School Board Ad Hoc Committee agenda for detailed planning, seeking feedback from PTA President Macedo on potential topics parents would want to discuss while avoiding controversial subjects.

Superintendent Lightle echoed the strong city-district partnership, highlighting the collaboration with Deputy Superintendent Katanda on communicating available community resources to families as the school year begins, adding that the District is finalizing a safety-focused resource guide that includes walking tips, awareness of suspicious behavior, and tip lines, to be distributed to families

and staff before school starts. Additionally, an Enrollment Update and a Facilities Master Plan Update are proposed to be presented at the September meeting.

Comments from the
Public

PTA President Macedo requested a review of the placement and scheduling of crossing guards due to concerns at Paramount Park, where guards leave before the dismissal of West Campus students, and at Hollydale, where guards are positioned in areas where crossing is not permitted, while the main crossing point lacks coverage. City Manager Moreno noted that addressing these issues is a collaborative effort between the City and the School District. It was explained that when requests are made, the process involves having the crossing guard contractor assess the situation, which may result in retraining current guards or adjusting their schedules. PTA President Macedo was requested to email specific locations of concern for further review with Superintendent Lightle.

ADJOURNMENT

City Manager John Moreno adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.