

**CITY OF PARAMOUNT
MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL/SCHOOL BOARD AD HOC COMMITTEE
February 5, 2026**

Clearwater Building Auditorium
16401 Paramount Blvd, Paramount, CA 90723

CALL TO ORDER: City Manager John Moreno called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PUSD Board Members Present:
Alicia Anderson, Board Member
Yesenia Cuarenta, Board Member

City Council Members Present:
Wilma Cuellar Stallings, Councilmember
Isabel Aguayo, 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
Gaby Paredes, Executive Assistant

Absent:
There were none.

Public Present:
Daisy Macedo, PTA President

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Anderson moved to approve the minutes from the City Council/School Board Ad Hoc Committee meeting held on September 4, 2025, and Councilmember Aguayo seconded the motion.

Additionally, Councilmember Cuellar Stallings moved to approve the minutes from the City Council/School Board Ad Hoc Committee meeting held on November 13, 2025, with Councilmember Aguayo seconding that motion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Business Spotlight Video Contest City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Assistant City Manager Chavez gave the report.

Assistant City Manager Chavez discussed the City's second annual Business Spotlight video contest, which invites students to create short videos promoting local small businesses, noting that approximately three student submissions had been received so far, with additional entries still being accepted through the deadline that day. The contest will be featured and voted on through social media the following week, with winners announced around February 13. Prizes include up to \$800, with award amounts varying for first, second, and third place. In addition, the City will purchase gift cards from the winning businesses and distribute them through social media promotions, further supporting local "mom and pop" shops that often lack advertising budgets. The initiative aligns with recent community polling, which showed that 86% of residents highly value small businesses, underscoring the program's importance to the City's economic development efforts and community priorities.

2. PEP Scholarships Update City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Community Services Director Guillen gave the report.

Community Services Director Guillen announced that the application window for PEP scholarships is now open, with a firm deadline of March 31. Since the system is automated, late submissions cannot be accepted. Applications are now fully online through the Kaleidoscope platform, which has significantly increased participation since transitioning to the online system, doubling and even tripling, as students can easily apply and use the same profile to pursue additional external scholarships. Outreach

efforts include mass emails to district principals and counselors, social media promotion, and direct contact with past participants, who are eligible to reapply. Scholarship awards are set at \$1,000 for community college students, \$3,000 for Cal State or trade school students, and \$4,000 for UC students, with final award decisions made by the PEP board. Community members, counselors, and educators serve as graders, reviewing applications without access to students' personal identifying information, and an AI-detection feature has been added this year to help ensure academic integrity. While some parents have expressed confusion about the shift from Schoology to the Kaleidoscope platform, Community Services Director Guillen offered to coordinate workshops and Q&A sessions to assist families through the new process. Plans to compile stronger applicant data in future years to better understand applicant demographics and trends were also mentioned, highlighting the continued collaboration and guidance from district leadership, including Superintendent Lightle, who serves as a non-voting board member.

3. PEP Fundraising

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

Community Services Director Guillen shared an overview of PEP's fundraising efforts, emphasizing that all scholarships are funded entirely through donations, with 100% of contributions going directly to students. To enhance outreach, QR-code flyers with direct donation links were distributed, and PEP will be promoted during the upcoming State of the City event through a brief presentation aimed at engaging local business leaders. The School District is also supporting fundraising efforts by sending mass communications to approximately 1,700 employees, encouraging small individual donations, and highlighting the collective impact of giving. The City further promotes donations by sharing information with vendors, consultants, and contractors, noting that while PEP is affiliated with the City, School District, and Chamber, it operates as an independent nonprofit. Additionally, the City is planning adjustments to this year's PEP fundraising

event by moving it to a Thursday afternoon in April and restructuring it as a business mixer designed to attract new donors while recognizing existing supporters. The City fully funds this event as its contribution to PEP, and it will feature casino-style tables, food, entertainment, and raffles, all supported by community donations. Community Services staff are also providing ongoing administrative support to help sustain and grow the nonprofit's impact.

4. PHS Reunifications Update

City Manager Moreno introduced the item, and Superintendent Lightle gave the report.

Superintendent Lightle provided an update on plans to reunify ninth-grade students from the West Campus with the Senior Campus to form a comprehensive 9–12 Paramount High School by the 2027–2028 school year. With the transition approximately 18 months away, preparations are well underway, guided by a 40-member Reunification Task Force composed of students, parents, classified and certificated staff, and administrators who meet regularly to review plans and provide feedback. The update includes two critical facilities phases that must be completed before reunification: **Phase One**, targeted for completion around March 2027, will redevelop the west athletic area with new tennis courts, a relocated baseball field, a multi-use turf field, and a field house in which physical education for Paramount Park Middle School is expected to transition to this upgraded space once construction is complete; **Phase Two**, scheduled to be finalized before the start of the August 2027 school year, will add about 150 parking spaces and improve traffic circulation at the Senior Campus. Following reunification, projected enrollment is just about 89% of campus capacity, making these improvements essential. The District emphasized that meeting these timelines is non-negotiable to ensure a smooth and successful reunification, while also confirming that parking near the new baseball facilities off Third Street will remain at current capacity and will be formalized through the joint-use agreement with the City.

5. Comments from
 Committee Members Board Member Cuarenta requested that two items be added to the agenda for the next Ad Hoc Committee meeting: (1) Safe Routes to School, and (2) a discussion about allowing neighborhood residents to use the Mark Keppel field/track for walking and wellness, similar to a program she has seen in Compton. Superintendent Lightle indicated the issue is more of an internal topic for the District to consider rather than something for the joint Ad Hoc Committee to decide at this time.
6. Comments from Staff There were none.
- Comments from the There were none.
 Public

ADJOURNMENT

City Manager John Moreno adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.