



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
April 12, 2022  
ADOPTED MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

In accordance with Governor Newsom's executive orders of social distancing due to the COVID-19, the Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, as a teleconference/video conference meeting where one or more members participated. The public had the opportunity to submit their public comment via the public comments email address or live via the Zoom platform. The public streaming of the Regular Board meeting was made available through the Ventura Adult and Continuing Education, TDC Studios YouTube Channel or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89843022748?pwd=RUMvUG96VFdZN3ZiSGxZa3J1blZaUT09>

Those in attendance were:

Board President	Mr. Matt Almaraz
Board Vice President	Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez
Board Member	Ms. Amy Callahan
Board Member	Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Board Member	Ms. Velma Lomax
Superintendent	Dr. Roger Rice
Asst. Supt. /Bus. Services	Ms. Rebecca Chandler
Asst. Supt. /Ed. Services	Dr. Antonio Castro
Asst. Supt/Human Resources	Ms. Gina Wolowicz
General Counsel	Mr. Anthony Ramos

**Adoption of Agenda**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda, moving item 16.a up to proceed 15.a, and pulling item 15.d to be brought back to a future meeting for further discussion.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**4.a Consideration of Resolution #22-11, Continuing Board of Trustees Authority to Hold Virtual Meetings Pursuant to AB 361.**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #22-11 as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**Public Comment on Closed Session Items**

None.

**Motion to go to Closed Session**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:06 p.m.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**REGULAR SESSION - Ron Halt Classroom - 7:00 p.m.**

At 7:19 p.m., Board President Matt Almaraz called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

**Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Mr. Sean Bell as the new Assistant Principal at Ventura Adult and Continuing Education.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Dr. Greg Bayless as the new Executive Director, Educational Services.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice, introduced the new Director of Elementary Education, Dr. Soledad Molinar. Dr. Molinar thanked Dr. Rice and the Board, then took a moment to introduce her family.

Dr. Rice introduced the new Deputy Director of Special Education, Dr. Mayra Vega-Manriquez. Dr. Vega-Manriquez thanked Dr. Rice and the Board, then took a moment to introduce her family.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to 12 Ventura High Schools students who were Ventura County Science Fair winners and who are now moving on to the California State Science Fair.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to Mr. Paul Hunt, Music Director at Ventura High School, and to the Ventura High Wind Ensemble Honors and String Orchestra, who recently returned from a five-day trip to the Chicago Festival, where they earned Superior ratings from the adjudicators.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to Ms. Marieanne Quiroz, Director of Communications and PIO, and to Mr. Martin Foley, Communications Specialist, for their extraordinary work in creating new websites for all VUSD schools and departments.

Student Board Members Karyme Fierros, representing Foothill High School, Sierra Sanchez Rosales, representing Pacific High School, and Sophia Green, representing El Camino High School, gave brief updates on the exciting things happening at their school sites.

**Correspondence**

**13.a Ventura County Office of Education**

Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) received correspondence from Ventura County Office of Education, approving the 2020-2021 VUSD audit extension through April 30, 2022.

**Public Comments**

The following individuals gave a public comment via email or live via Zoom\*:

1. Rose Wagner asking the Board to reconsider the termination of three nutrition specialists and to share the impact that the Healthy Schools Project has had on our students.
2. David White asking the Board to not eliminate the nutrition specialists in the Healthy Schools Program.
3. Jenny Jacobs asking the Board to not eliminate the nutrition specialists in the Healthy Schools Program.
4. Rose Wagner\* asking the Board to reconsider the termination of three nutrition specialists and to share the impact that the Healthy Schools Project has had on our students.



5. Dan Nelson\* thanking VUEA for all that they do; giving a shout out to teacher librarians; thanking all SPED providers; and thanking the Board.
6. Johnnie Hernandez\* sharing information regarding his Cannabis business Haven that is currently trying to get approved by the city of Ventura.
7. Rebecca Fasset\* thankful that item 15.d has been pulled, encouraging the Board to continue with the healthy Schools program.
8. Heather Lacayo\* encouraging the Board to continue with the Healthy Schools program and stating the importance of the program in our Title 1 schools.
9. Stephanie Uy\* sharing information regarding the Shryne Cannabis Group that is currently trying to get approved by the city of Ventura.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **15.a Information and Educational Technology Audit**

Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Ms. Anna Campbell, Director of Fiscal Services, presented a contract for Board consideration to conduct an Information and Educational Technology Audit. It was noted that the audit would potentially cost \$45,000, take two months to complete, and would provide a technology plan.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the contract with California IT in Education and Computer Using Educators as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

### **15.b "Sunshine" of Initial Contract Proposals from Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) to Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) and from Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) to Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) for Collective Bargaining**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the initial contract proposals from VESPA to VUSD and VUSD to VESPA.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

### **15.c "Sunshine" of Initial Contract Proposals from Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) to Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) and Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) to Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) for Collective Bargaining**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the initial contract proposals from VUEA to VUSD and VUSD to VUEA.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

### **15.d Reduction in Classified Positions/Layoff of Classified Employees, 2022-2023 Fiscal Year**

This item was pulled from the agenda to be brought back at a future Board meeting for further discussion.

### **15.e Approval of History Social Science Instructional Materials for Grades 6-8**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the History Social Science Instructional Materials for grades 6-8 as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**15.f Administrative Recommendations for Student Expulsions**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the administrative recommendation for student expulsion for students #22-13 and #22-14 as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**15.g Run-Off Ballot for California School Board Association (CSBA) Delegate Assembly**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to cast their run-off vote for Darlene Bruno.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**15.h Approval of Technology Infrastructure Equipment**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the purchase of the Storage Area Network (SAN) equipment under the NASPO cooperative contract as presented, with the caveat that the auditors from the Information and Educational Technology review, recommend the purchase.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**16.a African American Parent Council (AAPC) Advisory Report to the Board**

Dr. Soledad Molinar, Director of Elementary Education, Multilingual and multicultural Education, introduced the African American Parent Council (AAPC) Members to present the AAPC advisory report to the Board. Dr. Molinar was joined by Bobbie Richards, Leisa Oden-Kurz, Robin Freeman, and Joe Richards. The report included a review of the AAPC Mission Statement, accomplishments, reflections, and recommendations to the Board.

**CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT**

**17.a Declining Enrollment Update**

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice, introduced Mr. James Forsythe, Declining Enrollment Committee Chair. Mr. Forsythe shared information from the three meetings that took place on February 10, March 2, and March 29. Mr. Forsythe noted that the committee has reviewed data and funding sources, elected a chair and co-chair, updated their members due to nonattendance or request, and created potential surveys to distribute to families who are leaving VUSD as well as those who remain in the district. Mr. Forsythe shared that next steps include reviewing options and strategies, and developing a set of recommendations for Board consideration.

**17.b Consideration of Board Priorities for the 2022-23 School Year**

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice, presented a consolidated 2022-23 Board Priorities list for the Board's consideration. There was Board consensus to bring this item back at a future Board meeting to allow the Board additional time to give feedback. The Board did suggest adding IT/Infrastructure under the Facilities priority.

**CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

**18.a Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending March 31, 2022**

Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, noted that for the quarter ending March 31, 2022, no complaints were filed.

**18.b Salary Schedule Review - Principals**

Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, and Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, presented information about bringing Principal salary schedules up to County averages to recruit and retain site administrators. Ms. Wolowicz reviewed structural issues that exist within the current salary schedules.

The Board requested feedback from Principals regarding the proposed salary schedule changes and requested that health benefits be factored into the comparison between neighboring districts. Ms. Wolowicz noted that she would work on compiling the information to present to the Board.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve consent items #19 to 23 as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

- 19.a Overnight, Out of the Tri-County and Ratification Field Trips

**CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

- 20.a Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2021-22 School Year
- 20.b Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 and/or 2022-23 School Year
- 20.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Substitute Teachers for the 2021-22 School Year
- 20.d Approval of Administration's Recommendation of Employment Status Changes for 21-22 School Year
- 20.e Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year

**CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified**

- 21.a Classified Position Changes

**CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES**

- 22.a Designation of Gold Coast Joint Benefits Trust Representatives 2021-22
- 22.b Foothill Technology High School "Butterfly Mosaic" Mural
- 22.c Award of Bid C1-23, Mound Fire Reconstruction
- 22.d Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts
- 22.e Ratification of Check Payments



22.f Disposition of Obsolete and Surplus Items

**CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT**

23.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

**BOARD REPORTS**

Trustee Velma Lomax noted her attendance at the Declining Enrollment Committee meeting. Ms. Lomax also shared that she hopes VUSD will get back to having regularly scheduled Technology meetings soon, especially after the audit is complete.

Trustee Dr. Jerry Dannenberg noted that he attended the Declining Enrollment Committee meeting on behalf of President Almaraz who was unable to attend. Dr. Dannenberg also attended the PAC meeting where they shared that the websites will be coming out soon. Lastly, he attended an AVID event at Foothill and the Teacher of the Month Celebration at Pacific High School.

Trustee Amy Callahan noted her attendance at the LCAP Advisory Council meeting and shared that they will be sending out surveys to families soon. Ms. Callahan attended the Masters in Governance Level 1 training through the California School Board Association. Lastly, she attended today's PAC meeting and encouraged representation from all of our schools.

**COMING EVENTS**

- Board Holiday, District Closed: April 15
- AAPC Meeting: April 20 at 5:30 p.m.
- LAUNCH Event - April 21 at 6:00 p.m.
- PAC Meeting: May 3 at 9:30 a.m.
- Teacher of the Month Celebration: May 4 at Will Rogers
- LCAP Meeting: May 12 at 8:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

**FUTURE BOARD ITEMS**

- Student Data - TBD
- Student Voice - TBD
- Board Priorities - TBD

**BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS - (No official action will be taken)**

President Matt Almaraz shared that he is resigning from the Board of Education effective tomorrow, April 13, 2022, due to taking a position with a company that does business with the city of Ventura and in turn the District. Mr. Almaraz thanked Dr. Rice, the Executive Board, and all staff and shared that it has been a privilege serving the District.

**CLOSED SESSION**

None.

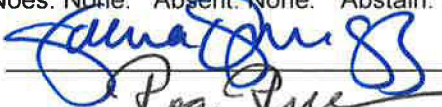
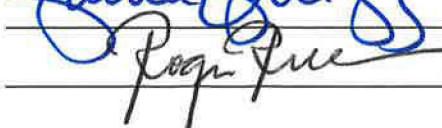
**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Mr. Matt Almaraz, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m., until our next Regularly schedule Board meeting to be held on May 10, 2022.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax

Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

APPROVED

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Secretary

**From:** Wagner, Rose  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2022 8:54 AM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** Public Comment for 4.12.22 Board Meeting

Greetings VUSD board members,

My name is Rose Wagner and I am a VUSD parent and Nutrition Specialist with the VUSD Healthy Schools Project. We are the education arm of the Farm to School program at the district and, myself, along with two additional Nutrition Specialists lead nutrition-based garden and cooking lessons at all 14 title one schools in the district. The goal of our programming is to help children develop positive, hands-on experiences that cultivate a healthy relationship with food and connect them with locally grown fruits and vegetables.

During this evening's board meeting, you will be asked to approve terminating three nutrition specialist positions which will bring an end to the Healthy School Project (HSP), a program that has been supporting students and teachers by providing nutrition-based cooking and gardening lessons for over 20 years.

This public comment serves two purposes: the first is to ask district leadership to reconsider; the second is to share with you and the VUSD community the impact our program has on our students.

During the 2020-2021 school year:

- 5,000 students across 14 schools participated in regular school garden, nutrition, and whole food cooking experiential education.
- HSP Nutrition and Garden Specialists taught 280 garden lessons, 157 whole food cooking lessons, and 157 nutrition lessons.
- Youth grew fruits and vegetables in 12 school gardens and harvested for lunchtime salad bars or brought it home to share with their families.
- 6,000 students tasted Ventura County grown fruits and vegetables in monthly Harvest of the Month (HOTM) lessons.
- Seven Ventura County growers were featured as HOTM farmers and provided fruits and vegetables for school meals and HOTM lessons.
- 240 teachers work alongside HSP Nutrition and Garden Specialists to implement this edible education.

Pre-covid, we also collaborated on a regular basis with the afterschool programs that are operated on-site at these title one schools, the City of Ventura and the UC Cooperative Extension & Hansen Ag Research Center. These are all things we are excited about resuming for the 2022-2023 school year.

In a perfect world, the district could fund our program at every VUSD school, but we don't live in that world and funds are tight. We get it! We have always been more than willing to raise our funds via grants to cover our salaries, benefits and materials. We've done it for years and we are up for it! Every Spring, we get that lay-off notice and we expect it because the grants have yet to be rewarded however, every year those grants come through and we don't expect this year to be any different. Currently, our largest funders are the Ventura County Public Health and the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

By cutting our positions and, in turn, the entire program, we are doing nothing but a disservice to all the students at our 14 title one schools. We all deserve to know why this program is being cut. If not for lack of funds, then why? Maybe there's something we're missing.

The sad part is that we could have the support of every single teacher, staff member, principal, parent and student but unless we have the support from district leadership and the board, we don't have a program. We deserve to know why. Something a little more compelling than the district is "going in a different direction." Away from the health and wellness of our students?

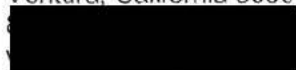
Everything we do is for our students. We want the best for them: educationally, emotionally and personally. Good health and healthy habits are such big pieces of that and we cannot ignore them! So why take it away? Please do not take that away.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Respectfully,

**Rose Wagner, RDN, Nutrition Specialist, Healthy Schools Project, CTE and Innovations Department**  
Ventura Unified School District

255 W. Stanley Avenue, Suite 100  
Ventura, California 93001



For the future of every student





**From:** David White <david@venturlandtrust.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2022 12:10 PM  
**To:** Almaraz, Matt; Callahan, Amy; Dannenberg, Jerry; Lomax, Velma; Rodriguez, Sabrena; Public Comment  
**Cc:** ParrishDecker, Ashley; Wagner, Rose; Jenny Jacobs  
**Subject:** -EXTERNAL SENDER- Vote to keep Healthy Schools program

Dear VUSD board,

Please do not layoff the Healthy schools program staff. This is such an important program, connecting our students to nature and teaching them how to grow and prepare healthy food. An ever increasing number of studies show that students participating in school garden programs have increased grade point averages and reduced behavioural issues. This much needed grant funded program is sure to receive funding as it continues to successfully engage students.

Please do **not** vote to eliminate the classified position of nutrition specialists in the Healthy Schools program.

Thank you for ensuring this important program continues at VUSD schools.

David R White PhD  
Program Director  
Ventura Land Trust

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Jenny Jacobs <jenny@venturalandtrust.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2022 1:44 PM  
**To:** Almaraz, Matt; Callahan, Amy; Dannenberg, Jerry; Lomax, Velma; Rodriguez, Sabrena;  
Public Comment  
**Subject:** -EXTERNAL SENDER- Please support Healthy Schools Project!

Dear VUSD board members,

As an outdoor educator, and parent of children who attend Will Rogers elementary, I strongly urge you to support the Health Schools Project and NOT let go of the incredible employees that have been running this program, Ashley Parrish Decker and Rose Wagner. Contrary to some of the information that has been shared, the Healthy Schools Project has been fully self-supported by renewable grants for the past 3 years, with another large grant in the works! I am also aware of the new ranch program being built at Pacific High, and the intentions of VUSD to create a centralized farm program, but this WILL NOT replace the local, more individualized education programs that HSP have brought to many elementary schools in Ventura. And while one of the arguments in support of the new ranch program is that it will reach all elementary schools, not just T1 schools that are the only schools to receive HSP programming, if HSP were financially and intellectually supported by the VUSD administration, HSP programs could be given at all elementary schools! One field trip, per year, for one class to this future ranch facility, will not come close to providing the personalized quality farm-to-table nutrition education program that HSP has been providing for years at many elementary schools.

Thank you for your time, and I urge you to, at the very least, hold off from cutting the financially independent and successful HSP until the ranch education program has actually been developed and implemented.

Jenny

--  
Jenny Jacobs

[Jenny](#) [REDACTED]

**Educator/Lead Staff**  
Ventura Wild  
Once Upon a Watershed  
[REDACTED]

