



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
September 7, 2021
APPROVED 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, September 7, 2021, 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. Those in attendance were:

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

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda, pulling item #16.b to be placed on a future board meeting, and with a revision to the language and contract for item # 21.b, changing January 1, 2021 to July 1, 2021.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Velma Lomax. Abstain: None.

*Velma Lomax joined late.

Public Comment on Closed Session Items

None.

Motion to go to Closed Session

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 6:02 p.m.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Velma Lomax. Abstain: None.

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

At 7:00 p.m., Board Vice President Matt Almaraz called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session

None.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice, shared information about the first day of school on August 25, 2021. He gave a huge shout out to all VUSD staff for their amazing work. He noted that the first Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting took place this morning where several of the items on the board agenda were discussed, including a presentation from Dr. Antonio Castro on learning continuity. Dr. Rice gave a special thanks to our School Resource Officers for joining the PAC meeting where they shared more about themselves as individuals. Dr. Rice noted that the first avocado tree planting ceremony took place at Sa'aliyas Ranch and he had the opportunity of planting one of the first trees along with Trustee Jerry Dannenberg. He gave a huge shout out to the principals and staff for the back-to-school nights, which are running over several weeks and looks forward to joining many of those. He congratulated Dr. Susan Martinez, principal at Lemon Grove School, who recently opened their K-8 school and shared that there are still spaces available in grades 7 & 8.

Dr. Rice shared some of the challenges that VUSD has faced, the main concern being staffing. VUSD, along with most other districts, have a shortage of labor force. VUSD is down 11 bus drivers, numerous para's, clerical staff and substitutes. VUSD has been working vigorously to address the shortages including pop up tent recruitments, passing out flyer before and after school and offering additional compensation for other VUSD employees to drive buses when they are available.

Student Board Member Logan Bobis, representing Ventura High School, and ASB Vice President Jayden Barrett, filling in for Student Board Member Ella Haas, shared brief updates on the exciting things happening at their school sites.

Correspondence

Dr. Rice received correspondence from Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Cesar Morales, approving the agreement between Ventura Unified School District and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association.

Public Comments

The following individuals gave a public comment via e-mail or live via Zoom*:

1. Lisa Rundle regarding questions around the COVID vaccine and CRT.
2. Arlene Martinez* requesting the color coordinated behavior cards be removed from classrooms.
3. Dan Nelson* thanking staff, especially Teacher Library Techs, and reminding everyone to please wear their masks appropriately for the safety of all.
4. Carol Peek* welcoming the students and staff back and giving a shout out to all ESP's for their tireless work during this time when we are short employees.
5. Rosejoseca asking what VUSD is doing for student's mental health, sharing an example of a middle school student.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

14.a Notice of Public Hearing Regarding Sufficiency of Textbooks or Instructional Materials or both for the 2021-22 School Year

A public hearing will be held on September 21, 2021 at 7:30 p.m., at Ventura Adult and Continuing Education via Teleconference, 5200 Valentine Road, Ventura, CA, regarding sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials or both for the 2021-22 school year.

CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

15.a Student Voice

Dr. Antonio Castro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, facilitated a discussion with the Board on Student Voice, which focused on strategies for increasing student engagement and advocacy at the district level. Board Members were asked key questions regarding what additional data they would like to have, what age groups should participate, types of student experiences we should try to capture and what purpose would the data be used for. Board Members suggested having feedback from all grade levels, Transitional Kindergarten through 12th grade; more student participation throughout the year; and ways to remove barriers. There was consensus to create an

ad hoc committee with Trustee Velma Lomax and Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez representing the Board.

15.b Review of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation related to Educational Services

Dr. Antonio Castro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, reviewed key elements of Ventura Unified School District's BP/AR 1240 Volunteer Assistance and asked for Board feedback. The main focus was on the overnight element in the policy which states that all overnight volunteers/chaperones who are not district employees or fully cleared district coaches, shall obtain fingerprint clearance through the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Board Members noted that they want to make sure this policy is being followed. There was additional Board feedback regarding parameter's needed for daily volunteers and a discussion was had as to whether these individuals should also receive clearance and how that would be funded; staff will look into the cost and procedures for initiating this. There was Board consensus to move forward with allowing volunteers back in to the schools, following the COVID protocols that are in place. This board agenda item will be brought back at a future board meeting.

15.c Teaching and Learning through COVID Conditions

Dr. Antonio Castro, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services, noted that VUSD has recently moved into a Modified Quarantine approach, which will drastically reduce the number of students that need to quarantine at home. Dr. Castro introduced Mr. Eric Reynold, Director of Risk Management, who shared that there are often delays in contact tracing. Examples of this include limited staffing, notification delayed by parents, or delays in testing results. Due to these factors, our conditions will need to be fluid and we need to remain flexible.

Dr. Castro stated that in order to maximize flexibility to our teachers throughout 2021-22 COVID conditions, district staff, in collaboration with Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA), agreed on several approaches to meet the needs of the students. These include Asynchronous learning through Seesaw and Canvas, con-current teaching (in-person and virtually), and curriculum packets. Dr. Castro noted that if a teacher is exposed in a work setting, they will have the option to join their classroom virtually, while a substitute is placed in the classroom.

The Board asked staff how we can support our families with rapid testing. Mr. Reynolds shared that VUSD is moving towards having rapid testing available on campuses for any staff or student who would like to be tested, with results within 15 minutes. Any positive test resulting from the rapid COVID test, would then be sent to have a regular PCR test done to verify.

CONFERENCE - BUSINESS SERVICES

**16.a 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals Financial Report and Annual GANN Limit Resolution 21-23
(Action Requested)**

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 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals Financial Report and the adoption of the Appropriations (GANN) Limit Resolution 21-23 as presented.

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

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

ACTION ITEMS

17.a Administrative Recommendation for Student Expulsion

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 1 to approve the administrative recommendation for student expulsion #22-02 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Velma Lomax, Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Noes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent item #18.a, was pulled for further discussion prior to taking the vote. Clarification was needed regarding the Out of the Tri-County Field Trip. It was noted that this was not an overnight field trip which are currently on hold and instead a two days in a row "up and back" trip.

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve consent items #18-21 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Velma Lomax, Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

- 18.a Out of the Tri-County Field Trip

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

- 19.a Approval of Variable Term Waiver for BCLAD Spanish Permit
- 19.b Approval of Variable Term Waiver for CLAD Authorization
- 19.c Approval of Variable Term Waiver for SS: French Credential
- 19.d Approval of Variable Term Waiver for SS: Chemistry Credential
- 19.e Ratification of Administration's Approval of Assignments Through Various Education Codes
- 19.f Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 19.g Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Substitute Teachers for the 2021-22 School Year
- 19.h Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 19.i Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 19.j Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2021-22 School Year

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

- 20.a Classified Personnel Changes
- 20.b Classified Position Changes

CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES

- 21.a Ventura Charter School Food and Nutrition Program Agreement for 2021-22
- 21.b Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) College and Career Pathways Agreement for 2021-25
- 21.c Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) Various Agreements
- 21.d Disposition of Obsolete and Surplus Items

21.e Ratification of Check Payments

21.f Ratification of Purchase Orders

BOARD REPORTS

Trustee Dr. Jerry Dannenberg thanked teachers and support staff for their hard work. He shared that he has visited several of the sites and attended the virtual back-to-school nights and has seen their hard work first hand.

Trustee Amy Callahan shared that she has been attending as many back-to-school nights as possible and shared her appreciation for all staff members.

Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez noted her attendance at the most recent Special Education District Advisory Committee (SEDAC) meeting. She shared that the SEDAC has had a challenge to get a parent representative from each school site and encouraged parents to reach out if they would like to take part. SEDAC also discussed the importance for additional training for Para Educators. Ms. Rodriguez attended the first Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting of the year this morning. She shared that VEP gave information about fall grants and Dr. Rice and Dr. Castro gave updates on important issues that were discussed on the agenda.

Trustee Velma Lomax shared that she has enjoyed her attendance at the virtual back-to-school nights. She also enjoyed attending a VEP donor event last week. Lastly, she shared that she along with other board members toured a facility with Alex Wulff, which may be a future CTE site.

Trustee Matt Almaraz shared that he was excited to get out to sites this week and in participating in the virtual back-to-school nights.

COMING EVENTS

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice shared the following Coming Events:

- DELAC: September 9th at 6:30 p.m.
- LCAP Advisory Committee Meeting: September 22nd at 8:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.
- African American Parent Committee (AAPC) Meeting: September 22nd at 5:30 p.m.
- Special Education District Advisory Committee (SEDAC) Meeting: September 24th at 9:00 a.m.
- Week of September 6th
 - September 8: Anacapa & Balboa
 - September 9: Cabrillo & DATA
- Week of September 13th
 - September 13: Homestead & Montalvo
 - September 14: E.P. Foster, Sunset & Pierpont
 - September 15: Elmhurst, Mound & Sheridan Way

FUTURE BOARD ITEMS

- Summer School Update - September
- Student Achievement - October
- Redistricting - October
- ESSER III Plan - October

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

Trustee Callahan asked what the Board could do to support VUSD.

Trustee Rodriguez thanked all VUSD staff, especially the Para Educators for the powerful difference they make in the life of their students and families.

Trustee Lomax shared the importance of everyone contributing to finding support for our district and to reach out to anyone we know who might even be able to work even on a temporary basis.

Trustee Almaraz took a moment to acknowledge the 13 military members who lost their lives this past week and for the victims affected by Hurricane Ida. He shared that his thoughts and prayers go out to all the families. He also wished his daughter a happy 21st birthday.

Superintendent Dr. Rice thanked the Board for their support. He gave a shout out to Ms. Anna Campbell for her amazing work and to all VUSD bus drivers for working tirelessly. He shared his appreciation for all they do.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no reason to return to closed session.


ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 p.m., to the next Regular Board Meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on September 21, 2021.

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

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

APPROVED



President



Secretary

From: [Lisa Rundle](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Fw: Question
Date: Monday, September 6, 2021 6:12:21 PM

From: Lisa Rundle <ldrundle@venturausd.org>
Sent: Monday, September 6, 2021 6:07 PM
To: public.comments@venturausd.org <public.comments@venturausd.org>
Subject: Question

1) I am wondering what consideration will be given to students who do not choose to take this Covid Vaccine. We all know that this is just a matter of time before it is mandated. Will students who do not take this be allowed to work from home over the internet? I will not be allowing my child to be PCR tested weekly in light of a vaccine mandate.

2) Is the state of California mandating CRT and if so what is Ventura USD stance on this subject? Will it be implemented and if so will parents be informed ahead of time and allowed to remove their student from the classroom during this "teaching"?

From: [rosejosec](#) [REDACTED]
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Students' mental health
Date: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 4:06:06 PM

I'd sent something similar last week, but was too late submitting it for the public comments for the meeting.

The 2020-2021 school year was a huge educational challenge for faculty, parents and students and it's exciting to be back to in person learning. My comment is to ask what we are doing to help students' mental health as they begin this year having faced so many emotional challenges? A recent example, a 7th grader at one of our Balboa Middle School was removed from GATE classes without any input/notification to the parent. All through elementary school the child thrived and excelled in the GATE program. Last year, as a 6th grader, the student struggled with online learning and not having the resources he needed to thrive. This caused him to feel depressed and anxious about his academic accomplishments. The first day of school for in person learning could not come fast enough. On that first day, the student learned he was no longer in GATE classes and he felt he'd done something wrong and struggled to understand why. The parent had not been informed of the change and requested that the student be returned to GATE classes and given a chance to grow academically in the in-person environment that would now provide what the student needs. To this day (9/7) the principal has not reached out to the parent except for an email to say that the student will remain where he is and maybe next semester there can be a change. On a side note, the school has already had a student assembly encouraging the students to raise funds. It is discouraging to me that this decision was based on an academic evaluation of a pandemic year, no parent input and that five years of thriving in an in person setting were not taken into consideration. It's not right, it's not looking at the whole person and it's not keeping with the district's commitment to "embrace families and community as partners in education." Thank you.