VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
January 11, 2022
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, January 11, 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/89824286355?pwd=Y2xrTVNkeUJSMUQ1R2I2bHpqcktYZz09
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
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 5 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda with the following change: Consent Item 22.b will be moved up to Action Item # 15.g.

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 5:15 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

At 7:09 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. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve closed session item 6.c, release of employee #112.

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. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve closed session item 6.b, the appointment of Dr. Clara Guerrero as the new principal of Sheridan Way.

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

PUBLIC HEARING

11.a **Public Hearing - Public Input Regarding Trustee Area Map Scenarios #1 and #2**
At 7:15 p.m., a Public Hearing was held regarding Trustee Area Scenarios #1 and #2. No public comments were given.

Superintendent's Report
Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice took a moment to recognize our VUSD School Board Members in honor of National School Board Recognition Month. Cabinet Members took a moment to express their appreciation to the Board Members.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to Ventura High School students who made the All-County Honor Band, the All-State Honor Band, and the All-State Orchestra.

Dr. Rice took the opportunity to recognize the VUSD Gratitude Award recipients for the month of December. The Gratitude Awards were designed to recognize exceptional VUSD teachers, employees, volunteers, students, and administrators associated with VUSD. There were a total of 89 submissions who will receive a certificate of acknowledgement. Five individuals were randomly selected to also receive a $50.00 Amazon gift card.

Student Board Members Karyme Fierros, representing Foothill Technology High School, and Ms. Danielle Shew, representing El Camino High School, shared brief updates on the exciting things happening at their sites. Absent from tonight's meeting was Student Board Member Daniella Gallardo from Pacific High School.

Correspondence
None.

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

- Michelle Johnston regarding the need for a full-time counselor at every school site.
- Dan Nelson* thanked teachers, members of VUEA and VESPA, district staff, and parents for how hard everyone is working to get through this very difficult time.
- Carol Peek* expressed her gratitude and thanked all Education Support Professionals for going above and beyond to make sure that staff and students have everything they need to be successful.

ACTION ITEMS

15.a **Consideration for Approval to Move Forward with a General Obligation Bond in 2022**
Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Mr. Jon Isom, Financial Advisor, gave a brief update on the possibility of adding a General Obligation (GO) Bond to the ballot in 2022. Timelines for adding a GO bond to the June ballot verses the November ballot were discussed. It was noted that the average number of bonds in Ventura County is three; Ventura currently has one, passed in 1997. It was also noted that the original estimation was to seek a 350 million dollar bond, however that amount has now increased and could now be upwards of 380 million.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to move forward with polling the community regarding adding a General Obligation Bond to the ballot.

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Ms. Velma Lomax
Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez*. Abstain: None.
*Trustee Rodriguez was unable to attend regular session.

15.b **Request for Board Approval of Proposed Changes, Deletions or Additions to Board Policies, Administrative Regulation Related to Business Services and Educational Services**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the proposed changes, deletions or additions to board policies and administrative regulation related to Business Services and Educational Services as presented.

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

15.c **Substitute Teacher Increase in Pay**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the substitute teacher increase in pay with the following amendment: Any consecutive days worked in the month of December will be counted towards the 10 consecutive days needed.

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

15.d **805 Evaluation and Analytics**

Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Dr. Roger Rice, Superintendent, led a discussion surrounding 805 Evaluation and Analytics. Dr. Chandler noted that the contract is short-term, ending in June 2022. Dr. Rice shared that conversations around creating an in-house position to fulfill data analyzing has begun, however the market for someone with the skillset is limited at this time.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 3 – 1 to approve the contract for 805 Evaluation and Analytics as presented.

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

15.e **Administrative Recommendation for Student Expulsion**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the administrative recommendation for student expulsion, #22-07.

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

15.f **Consideration of Resolution #22-01, Continuing Board of Trustees Authority to Hold Virtual Meetings Pursuant to AB 361.**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #22-01, continuing Board of Trustees authority to hold virtual meetings pursuant to AB361.

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

15.g **Award of C8-22 Rebid Greenhouse at Sa'aliyas Ranch Project**

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the bid from G2K Construction in the amount of $289,900.00.

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

CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT

16.a **Information/Discussion Concerning the Post-Census Analysis of the District's Current Trustee Area**
Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice led a discussion with the Board regarding which of the two scenarios they would prefer. There was Board consensus to bring back Scenario One as an action item at the January 25, 2022 board meeting.

CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

17.a **Personnel Commission 2020-2021 Annual Report**
Ms. Andrea Crouch, Director of Classified Human Resources, presented on the approved 2020-21 Personnel Commission Annual Report. The full report can be found at https://www.venturausd.org/Portals/5/Annual%20Report%2020-21.pdf.

17.b **Legal Update: The New Classified Layoff Process (AB438)**
Ms. Andrea Crouch, Director of Classified Human Resources, gave an update on Assembly Bill (AB) 438 which was signed on October 8, 2021 and became effective on January 1, 2022. AB 438 changes Education Code and Government Code relating to the layoff of classified employees. A preliminary notice of layoff must now be given by March 15 and final layoff notices must be sent to the employee before May 15. Employees now have the right to a hearing to challenge their layoff and retain reemployment rights for 39 months.

CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

18.a **Consideration of a New Course, *Agriculture Aquaponics* (Action Requested)**
Mr. Joe Bova, Principal on Special Assignment CTE, shared information regarding a new course, Agriculture Aquaponics, which will serve as a science elective for students at Pacific High School. This course emphasizes the scientific knowledge and methods necessary for agriculture, aquaponics, and hydroponics.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the new course, Agriculture Aquaponics as presented.

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

18.b **Consideration of a New Course, *CTE Con Agriculture Aquaponics* (Action Requested)**
Mr. Joe Bova, Principal on Special Assignment CTE, shared information regarding a new course, CTE Con Agriculture Aquaponics, which is a concentrator course for the CTE pathway. This course emphasizes the scientific knowledge and methods necessary for agriculture, aquaponics, and hydroponics. This course can be taken by any student in the district and will now count as a UC elective credit.

It was moved by Mr. Matt Almaraz, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the new course, CTE Con Agriculture Aquaponics as presented.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR
It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve consent items #19 through 22.a, and 22.c through 22.d as presented. Item 22.b was pulled from consent and voted on as Action Item 15.g.

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

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez. Abstain: None.

CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

19.a Consideration of a Supplementary Book, *The Lemonade War*

19.b Consideration of a Supplementary Book, *Think Like a Freak*

19.c Administrative Recommendation to Waive Board Policy 6146.1(High School Graduation Requirement)

19.d Overnight and Out of the Tri-County Field Trip

19.e Administrative Recommendation to Waive Education Code Section 51241 (Permanent Exemption from Physical Education)

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

20.a Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Substitute Teachers for the 2021-22 School Year

20.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year

20.c Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year

20.d Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending December 31, 2021

20.e Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

21.a Classified Position Changes

21.b Classified Personnel Changes

CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES

22.a Permission to Solicit Bids for Mound Fire Reconstruction Project

22.b Award of C8-22 Rebid Greenhouse at Sa'aliyas Ranch Project

22.c Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts

22.d Ratification of Check Payments

BOARD REPORTS

Trustee Velma Lomax shared that she attended a robotics kick-off meeting this past weekend where they planned upcoming events for March.

Trustee Jerry Dannenberg noted his attendance at the drama productions for Buena High and Ventura High that took place this past December. Dr. Dannenberg congratulated the students and teachers for their hard work.

Trustee Amy Callahan noted her attendance at the California School Board Association (CSBA) conference in December and shared with her fellow board members that the virtual sessions are still available on-line. Ms. Callahan gave a shout out to Mr. Eric Reynolds and his COVID team for putting together a COVID testing clinic and distributing COVID tests during winter break. Ms. Callahan attended the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

meeting on January 4 and commended Dr. Rice for leading and sharing information with the members. Ms. Callahan also shared that Ventura Education Partnership (VEP) will be starting their Arts and Social Justice Grants on January 17. Lastly, she shared that she will be attending the first Girls Re-Imagining Tomorrow (GRIT) all-day meeting at DATA Middle School this week.

Trustee Matt Almaraz noted his attendance at the CSBA conference this past December and shared that it was his first time attending as a CSBA Delegate. Mr. Almaraz visited Ventura High School and Sheridan Way with Dr. Rice. He attended several of the freshman/sophomore girl's soccer games and was able to be a referee at a recent alumni soccer game. Lastly, he attended a Mental Health Committee meeting on December 14.

COMING EVENTS

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice, shared the following coming events:

- DELAC Meeting: January 13 at 6:30 p.m.
- Martin Luther King Day: January 17 – District Closed
- African American Parent Committee Meeting: January 26 at 6:00 p.m.
- January 31: In-service Day – No Students
- LCAP Advisory Committee Meeting: February 3 at 8:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Matt Almaraz shared that he will be attending a California Department of Education (CDE) webinar on the overview of the universal prekindergarten planning template on January 13.

FUTURE BOARD ITEMS

- School Climate & Culture – January
- Legislative Update – January
- Budget Update – January
- Student Board Members – January
- LCAP – February.
- Study Session – Budget & Board Priorities – TBD

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

Ms. Velma Lomax thanked Mr. Bill Elsenbaumer, Director of Facilities, and Mr. Robbie Pennington, Facilities Manager, who helped distribute robotics supplies over the winter break.

Ms. Amy Callahan gave a shout out to Mark Mayer for collecting the remaining COVID-19 testing kits from all of the school sites over winter break and bringing them to the District for distribution to our families. Ms. Callahan noted that she would like to see where we are at in regards to the D and F rates for our students. Lastly, Ms. Callahan gave a shout out to fellow board member Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, who unfortunately could not be recognized this evening as she was out sick, for all of her tremendous work as a Board Trustee and Regional Director.

Trustee Almaraz thanked the Risk Management Department and all VUSD Health Techs who have been working so hard throughout this pandemic.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no need to go back to closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 p.m. to the next Regularly Board Meeting to be held on January 25, 2022.

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

APPROVED

Matthew B. Almaraz
_____President

Roger Rice
_____Secretary

From: Michelle Johnston
To: Public Comment
Subject: School Counselor
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 3:02:25 PM

Dear Board,

In my 27 years in Ventura Unified School District, I have said, "We need a full-time counselor at our elementary schools!" Every year since we have had LCAP surveys, that has been the one suggestion I always write in. This year, 2021-2022, has been the first year that a school I have worked in has had a full-time counselor. This has been WONDERFUL!

The elementary site is definitely different than the middle or high school, but we do need counselors in the elementary schools. In the elementary site, we have the opportunity to do early intervention. Think about anything in life whether it's your plumbing, your car, your health, etc. Is it better to neglect a problem or deal with it when it's smaller? We all know the answer! Early intervention is key and our counselor is vital to the success of our students. Counselors in the elementary school have the opportunity to build bridges with families for six years! Elementary counselors that are at two or more sites are not able to bond as easily with families and they have too many students to effectively work with.

Counselors at the elementary site are dealing with social-emotional and family life issues only. They do not have the responsibility of scheduling academic courses or guiding students in college decisions. However, what they can do in the early years can help ward off the discipline and social issues that do happen in the later years by dealing with them before they snowball.

Our counselor, Mrs. Mary Anderson, is a fabulous counselor. She is not only taking small groups of kids to work on issues from abandonment to friendship skills, but she also is in the classroom teaching whole group skill lessons. Together we are teaching our youngest students about the skills from *Second Step* and about concepts such as the power of being an ally, not a bully. In the past, I have had other terrific counselors like Sheila Holland who stretched herself working at two schools. I am sure the staff at Portola would be able to attest to the difference having a counselor full-time makes.

Please don't stop investing in the mental health of our elementary school students. This needs to be a priority and needs to be ongoing. Elementary sites are the place to invest in skills that will help not only currently, but in the future.

Thank you for taking these thoughts into consideration and thank you a full-time counselor this year! It is truly making a difference in the lives of many students and staff.

Sincerely,

Michelle Johnston

Michelle Johnston, Teacher

Ventura Unified School District

Distance Learning Teacher 4th grade

255 W. Stanley Avenue, Suite 100

Ventura, CA 93001

Google Voice [redacted]

For the future of every student