



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
April 13, 2021
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 13, 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 special 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. /Certificated HR	Dr. Jeff Davis
Asst. Supt. /Bus. Services	Ms. Rebecca Chandler
Asst. Supt./Ed. Services	Dr. Antonio Castro
General Counsel	Mr. Anthony Ramos

*Trustee Matt Almaraz joined at 8:14 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as presented.

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

Public Comment on Closed Session Items

None.

Motion to go to Closed Session

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:31 p.m.

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

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

At 7:00 p.m., Board President Velma Lomax called the Regular 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 how excited everyone is that our students are back on campuses and that this is partly due to the new COVID data released by the County of Ventura. Dr. Rice shared the Blueprint Matrix for Ventura County which showed a decline in both Case Rate, now at a 2.8 and a Positivity Rate of 1.3, placing

us in the Orange Tier. Dr. Rice, along with new Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Dr. Antonio Castro, had the opportunity to visit six secondary schools on Monday April 12, including Buena, Foothill, El Camino, Cabrillo, Ventura and DATA.

Dr. Rice acknowledged one of the challenges that we have faced this week has been with transportation. Currently, VUSD is serving over 2,000 students with transportation and has been working hard to accommodate requests. However, there were close to twenty families who did not receive the communication they needed prior to the start of school and for this he extended his personal apology.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to the *Rusty Sailors*, Cabrillo Middle School's Robotics Team, who are advancing in an entrepreneurial competition that is extremely competitive and are doing an excellent job. In addition, he shared that the Circuit of Life Robotics Team, VUSD Team 3925, sent a note to the Board and the administrative staff for their support of CTE and robotics, along with a silk screened mask with their logo.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to Mr. Paul Hunt, Music Director for Ventura High School (VHS), and the VHS musicians, who gave a live performance in the quad on Monday stating that it was a real treat to see the students playing.

Dr. Rice shared that he and his team have been enjoying many of the extra-curricular and co-curricular activities for the myriad of sports and activities that are currently going on and that he appreciates all the hard work that goes in to that.

Dr. Rice introduced the new Lincoln Elementary Principal for the upcoming 2021-22 school year Mr. Mark Asher and welcomed him to VUSD. Mr. Asher thanked the Board and shared his excitement for joining VUSD, then took a moment to introduce his family.

Dr. Rice honored two employees from the Ventura Adult and Continuing Education Center, Mr. Rich Sigerist and Mr. Tim Oglesbee. Mr. Sigerist and Mr. Oglesbee were honored for using their talents to give back to their school, their district, and the community.

Correspondence

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice shared the following correspondences:

- Extension Request and Approval for the 2019-20 Ventura Unified School District Audit
- Ventura County Office of Education Receipt of the Disclosure of Collective Bargaining for the Tentative Agreements with VUEA and VESPA Bargaining Units
- Lease Extension Request from Ventura County Christian School - Washington Property

Board President Velma Lomax shared the following correspondences:

- VCOE: Positive Certification of VUSD's First Interim Report, for period ending October 31, 2021
- Anonymous Parent Letter

Public Comments

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

- Melissa Sapp regarding the waitlist for students who originally chose DL in secondary, but are now requesting to return to Hybrid.
- Carlos Alcantar urging the board to allow in-person graduation ceremonies this June.
- Dan Nelson* thanking the VEAU members for their patience and hard work over this past year.
- Ashley Pope* regarding transportation issues and safety concerns as well as requesting an ESY for SPED students.
- Carol Peek* thanking the VESPA members and negotiation team for all of their hard work and dedication over this past year.

CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

14.a Consideration of a Supplementary Book *Deep Kindness*

Dr. Greg Bayless, Director, Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, introduced a supplementary book *Deep Kindness* for the Board's consideration. If approved, *Deep Kindness* would be added to the approved list of books for all ninth through twelfth grade ASB classes.

14.b Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant Template and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Dr. Antonio Castro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, gave an update on the Expanded Learning Opportunity (ELO) Grant Plan and stakeholder engagement process. The ELO Grant Plan must be adopted by the local governing board by June 1, 2021 and submitted to the County Office of Education and the California Department of Education within five days of adoption. The deadline for expenditures is August 22, 2022.

Dr. Castro reviewed the ELO Grant Plan template which will outline how our district plans to provide supplemental instruction and support to students, including those identified as needing academic, social-emotional, and other supports, including the provision of meals and snacks. The plan will explain how the Local Education Agency will use the funds it receives through the ELO Grant to implement a learning recovery program for at least the students included in one or more of the following groups: low-income students, English learners, foster youth, homeless students, students with disabilities, students at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, disengaged students, and students who are below grade level, including, but not limited to, those who did not enroll in kindergarten in the 2020–21 school year, credit -deficient students, high school students at risk of not graduating, and other students identified by certificated staff.

Dr. Castro opened it up to Board Members to give any feedback they have at the onset of this process. Suggestions included:

- Parent/student feedback regarding what they feel would be most useful in recovering from Distance Learning
- Intentionally seeking input from our English Learner Families
- Immediate strategies to help seniors about to graduate
- Supports for Dual Immersion students
- Supports for DL only students
- Supports for SPED students
- Early Literacy supports, especially in grades K-3
- CTE expansion into lower grade levels

CONFERENCE - BUSINESS SERVICES

15.a Ventura Unified School District Memorandum of Understanding Between Ventura Unified School District and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association - Second Amendment March 29, 2021 (Action Requested)

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) Memorandum of Understanding regarding COVID-19 and reopening of schools.

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

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

15.b Consideration of Approval for Management and Confidential Positions for Site-Based Duties related to Reopening of Schools (Action Requested)

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve management and confidential position stipends for the preparation of return to in-person instruction.

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

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

15.c Certification of Signatures (Action Requested)

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the certification of signatures of Dr. Antonio Castro, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services.

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

15.d Paper Education Company Inc. Service Agreement 2021-22 (Action Requested)

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the contract as amended, to be able to purchase additional users as needed, not exceeding the current total number of ninth through twelfth grade students.

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

ACTION ITEMS

16.a Approval of Resolution #21-06 Regarding Ethnic & Social Justice Studies (ESJS) Graduation Requirement Postponed due to Covid-19

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 #21-06, to delay the Ethnic and Social Justice Studies graduation requirement by one year.

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

16.b Approval of Resolution #21-07 Regarding VUSD's Commitment to Participate in the CA State Seal of Civic Engagement

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #21-07, regarding VUSD's commitment to participate in the CA State Seal of Civic Engagement.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve consent items 17-20 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

- 17.a Consideration of Lemon Grove School Mural
- 17.b Consideration of Citrus Glen Elementary School Murals

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

- 18.a Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending March 31, 2021.
- 18.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2020-21 School Year

- 18.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Substitute Teachers for the 2020-21 School Year
- 18.d Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2020-21 School Year
- 18.e Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2020-21 School Year
- 18.f Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2020-21 School Year

CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES

- 19.a Ratification of Final Settlement Agreement and Release of All Claims No. ML202103
- 19.b Disposal of Obsolete and Surplus Equipment
- 19.c Checks for March 2021
- 19.d Ratification of Purchase Orders (March 10, 2021 to March 30, 2021)

CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT

- 20.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD REPORTS

Trustee Dannenberg thanked VUSD employees for getting our students back to school and for their patience during these trying times. Dr. Dannenberg noted his attendance at the LCAP meeting on March 24 and the AVID celebration with the seniors on March 25.

Trustee Callahan shared that she is proud of our District and stated that the Leadership from VUEA, VESPA and the District Team is so impressive. Ms. Callahan noted her attendance at the Parent Advisory Committee meeting this morning as well as the LCAP meeting on March 24th and shared that she would love to see more participation from our community and parents.

Trustee Rodriguez noted her attendance at the Special Education Department Advisory Committee (SEDAC) meeting for the first time as the Board Appointed Representative. During the meeting they received a training on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) that was designed towards families to use at home, reinforcing what is being done in the classroom. They discussed teacher trainings and how to further invest in professional development for our teachers and addressed issues the parents have with IEP meetings and how to get information put together in one place. Ms. Rodriguez encouraged parents of special needs students to reach out to their principals if they would like to participate in this great committee.

Trustee Almaraz gave a shout out to Rich Sigerist and Tim Oglesbee and thanked them for all of their hard work. He shared that he is so excited that we are back to school and asked Dr. Rice to share his gratitude to all of his staff. He also thanked Dr. Rice directly for his leadership and guidance throughout this process.

Trustee Velma Lomax attended the groundbreaking celebration at Pacific High School for Sa'aliyas Ranch and shared how fun and exciting the event was.

COMING EVENTS

- African American Parent Committee (AAPC) Meeting: April 14th at 5:30 p.m.
- Buena/Ventura Football Game: April 16th at 7:00 p.m. (Buena)
- DELAC Meeting: April 22nd at 6:30 p.m.
- Teacher of the Month Celebration: April 14th at Sheridan Way
- Ventura High School - Zoom Musical, *Quest for Quinonium*:
- April 22nd – April 24th at 7:00 p.m. and April 25th at 4:00 p.m.
- Special Education Department Advisory Committee (SEDAC) Meeting: April 30th at 9:00 a.m.

FUTURE BOARD ITEMS

- Board Policies Update - April
- Human Resources Update - April
- Fall Reopening Update - TBD
- Study Session: Renaming of Facilities and Reviewing Pertinent Board policies - July
- Study Session: Learning Loss - May

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

- Trustee Dannenberg would like to have additional information about the So-Cal Gas Expansion in a Friday Letter.
- Trustee Almaraz asked if there were any plans in the works to do something for the 2020 graduates this year. Dr. Rene Rickard shared that there is an upcoming graduation meeting this Friday to discuss the 2021 graduates and that she will bring this up to the group for discussion.
- Trustee Rodriguez share that she is so excited at seeing the students back on campus.
- Trustee Almaraz shared that he loves seeing the school buses throughout town.
- Trustee Lomax thanked everyone for getting us back to school.
- Dr. Rice stated that it was wonderful to visit campuses on Monday and see the excitement of of staff and students.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no need to return to closed session.

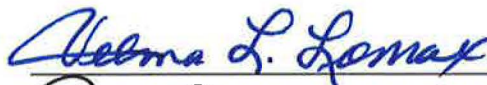
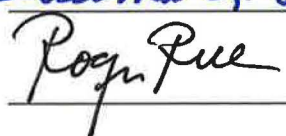
ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. to the next Regular Board Meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 27, 2021.

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

*Trustee Callahan was absent on this vote only due to technical issues.

APPROVED

 President
 Secretary

From: [Melissa Sapp](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Cc: [Jared](#)
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Waitlisted
Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 4:19:52 PM

Hello (again),

I'm am writing on behalf of a very frustrated family with a senior at Ventura High School.

A couple of months ago, we were sent a survey asking for our preference if we were to return back to school 2 days a week. At that time, our senior felt like that wasn't worth it to him for various reasons. Fast forward to March 28th when the board voted to return to on campus learning, 5 days a week. I immediately emailed our principle the morning of the 29th asking to please be switched to either cohort A or B.

He responded that my son would be placed on a waiting list and that we would be contacted by the school (more specifically, Ms. Banales) to facilitate that.

We were never contacted by anyone at the school. 2 weeks went by and I re-emailed my sons school counselor, principle Cohen and Ms. Banales...no response. I then phoned Banales and Cohen, left messages, no response. We have been very patient and offering lots of "grace and space" for the kinks to be worked out. The lack of communication is not acceptable. Today I received a phone call from the school office stating that my son would not be moved to a new cohort due to a "hefty waiting list" and we would be contacted if/when there was space for him. Unacceptable. This is PUBLIC SCHOOL. It is a constitutional right to attend public school. It's what our tax dollars go towards. The CDC states a 3-ft rule. That was the rule pre-pandemic. There was space before, why is there no space now? Our students, specifically our seniors have missed so much, too much. This is unfair and these kids have every right to be IN SCHOOL if they choose to.

Please help open the lines of communication and shed light on how we get ALL our kids back in school.

Frustrated and losing faith in the system,
Melissa Sapp

From: [Carlos Alcantar](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Senior Graduation
Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 4:28:54 PM

Good evening Ventura Unified Board of Education,

My name is Carlos Alcantar, and as a current Buena High School senior, I would like to inquire about graduation. I hope that you strongly consider choosing an in-person ceremony considering COVID-19 restrictions are slowly being lifted. As Ventura County enters the orange tier and hybrid-learning occurs, we feel that the school can create a socially distanced graduation at the Buena stadium. An overwhelming amount of the seniors I have talked to, have expressed interest in an in-person graduation ceremony.

Although we are just one opinion and acknowledge that VUSD has to follow the appropriate health guidelines, the senior class at Buena urges you to highly consider the possibility of an in-person graduation. After the stressful year we've had, an in-person ceremony would be a nice way to end our high school careers.

Thank you,

Carlos Alcantar