



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
March 14, 2023  
ADOPTED MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

The Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at the ESC Board Room, where one or more members participated. The public had the opportunity to submit their public comment in person. Streaming of the meeting was available at <https://www.youtube.com/@VenturaUnifiedSchoolDistrict/streams>. Those in attendance were:

Board President	Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez
Board Vice President	Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Board Member	Ms. Amy Callahan
Board Member	Mr. Calvin Peterson
Board Member	Mr. James Forsythe
Superintendent	Dr. Antonio Castro
Asst. Supt. /Bus. Services	Mr. Ahsan Mirza
Asst. Supt. /Ed. Services	Dr. Greg Bayless
Asst. Supt./Human Resources	Ms. Gina Wolowicz

**Adoption of Agenda**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda with the following change: Item 14.e was pulled from the agenda.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe  
Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**Public Comment on Closed Session Items**

There was no public comment on closed session items.

**Motion to go to Closed Session**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:01 p.m.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe  
Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

**REGULAR SESSION - Board Room - 7:00 p.m.**

At 7:05 p.m., Board President Sabrena Rodriguez called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was held for a Ventura High School student who passed away last week.

**Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the public employment/appointment, pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b), of Ms. Gina Young, as the new Principal at Mound Elementary School.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe  
Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro acknowledged the Ventura Optimist Club essay winners from El Camino and Ventura High School. The Board took a moment to thank the students for their hard work and for sharing their incredible stories at a recent awards breakfast. Dr. Castro congratulated Ms. Carly Donick, a teacher at Cabrillo Middle School, for her new role on the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Board of Directors. Dr. Castro congratulated the Cabrillo Jazz band for earning first place in the Middle School Division at the Dos Pueblos Jazz Festival and for winning the "Best in Jr. High Band" category as well as "Best in Parade," in the recent St. Patrick's Day parade. Dr. Castro congratulated Ventura High School's Wind Ensemble II Honors who earned unanimous Superior Gold ratings from all adjudicators and the Rancho Campana Festival in Camarillo. Lastly, Dr. Castro congratulated Ms. Carol Peek, who is this year's California Teachers Association's (CTA's) Education Support Professional of the Year.

Dr. Castro recognized the VUSD Gratitude Award recipients for February. The Gratitude Awards were designed to recognize exceptional VUSD teachers, employees, volunteers, students, and administrators. There were a total of 12 submissions that will receive a certificate of acknowledgment. Four individuals were randomly selected to also receive an Amazon gift card.

Student Board Members Nathan Arthur, representing Buena High School, and Mateo Navarro, representing Ventura High School, gave brief updates on the exciting things happening at their school sites. Gino Cesares representing Pacific High School was absent from the Board meeting.

### **Correspondence**

None.

### **Public Comments**

The following individuals gave a public comment:

1. Carol Peek thanked the Board for her recognition as the CTA's Education Support Professional of the Year.
2. Mabel Valenzuela shared her concerns with bus route times for high school students who arrive an hour and a half before school begins.
3. Dan Nelson requested the Board examine our Board Policies regarding Family Medical Leave, which currently states that employees are unable to use their accrued personal days during that time, instead of taking unpaid leave. Also, our policy states that the employee must provide a doctor's note, which can be difficult. Lastly, he would like to get the school year calendars sunshined for the next two years.
4. Anne Garo read a statement from her daughter in favor of continuing the dance program at Ventura High School.
5. Adeline Cagnacci in favor of continuing the dance program at Ventura High School.
6. Taylor Koester noted the importance of dance education and in favor of continuing the dance program at Ventura High School.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

**14.a Resolution #23 -12 Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of General Obligation Bonds, Election of 2022, Series A in a Principal Amount Not to Exceed \$113,000,000, and Approving Documents and Official Actions Relating Thereto (First Reading)**

Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Mr. Ahsan Mirza introduced Mr. Jon Isom, of Isom Advisors, to update the Board on the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bonds. Mr. Isom noted next steps which include establishing the legal parameters, getting the bonds rated and insured, and selling the bonds. Mr. Isom noted that the bond underwriter is RBC, who will take on all of the risks if we do not sell all of the bonds. Mr. Isom shared that the Bond Oversight Committee will oversee that funds are spent appropriately and must give an update to the Board annually. Mr. Isom noted that the goal is to spend 85% of the bond monies received within the first three years, with the remaining 15% to be spent over the following two years. Mr. Isom noted that the IRS does not tax the bond monies received unless the money is not being used within the allotted time and is drawing interest. Mr. Isom noted that typically there is a bond sale every two years and that bonds can be refinanced for lower interest in later years.



There was Board consensus to get a Board Memo on projects that have already been funded that can now be reimbursed with bond monies.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-12, authorizing the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bonds, Election of 2022, Series A in a principal amount not to exceed \$113,000,000, and approving documents and official actions relating thereto.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.b Ventura Unified School District Transportation Plan 2023-2024 (First Reading)**

Mr. Ahsan Mirza, Assistant Superintended of Business Services, and Mr. Arie Wiberg, Director of Transportation, presented the 2023-24 Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) Transportation Plan. Mr. Wiberg shared information on Assembly Bill (AB) 361, which requires the district to show how we plan to prioritize planned transportation services for pupils Tk-6 and pupils that are low-income in grades 7-12. Mr. Mirza noted that a requirement of AB 361 is to consult with classified staff, teachers, school administrators, regional transit authorities, local air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, parents, pupils and other stakeholders. VUSD held this consultation on February 23, 2023. AB 361 also requires this plan to be presented and approved by the Board annually on or before April 1.

Mr. Wiberg shared stakeholder feedback and opportunities for growth. Mr. Wiberg noted the new 2023- 24 priorities, reviewed the 2023-24 transportation plan, and reviewed the challenges and benefits of the new plan. He noted that families will need to register for transportation before June 30 of each year.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Ventura Unified School District Transpiration Plan 2023-2024 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.c Approval of K-12 Schools and Adult Education Comprehensive Safety Plans for the 2022-23 School Year**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the K-12 Schools and Adult Education Comprehensive Safety Plans for the 2022-23 school year as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.d Administrative Recommendation for Student Expulsion**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to approve administrative recommendation for student expulsion #23-06 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.e Resolution #23-13, regarding Continued Funding Application for State Preschool Program 2023- 24 Revised**

This item was pulled from the agenda.

**14.f Consideration of Resolution #23-11 Continuing Board of Trustees Authority to Hold Virtual Meetings Pursuant to AB 361**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-11, continuing Board of Trustees authority to hold virtual meetings pursuant to AB361 as presented. Board president Sabrena Rodriguez asked that this item be placed under consent for future meeting

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.g Consideration to Approve the Board of Education Governance Handbook (First Reading)**

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Board of Education Handbook as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**14.h 2022-23 Second Interim Financial Report Presentation**

Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Mr. Ahsan Mirza, and Director of Fiscal Services Ms. Anna Campbell, presented the Second Interim Budget Report. Mr. Mirza noted that the district is raising the minimum reserve from 3% (minimum) to 6% for the current year and for 2023-24 and 2024-25. He noted that this was imperative as it would take a 6% reserve to cover one month of VUSD salaries in the case of an unforeseen event, like we had in March 2020 with the COVID pandemic. Mr. Mirza noted that best practice is to have a 10% reserve, the maximum allowed. Mr. Mirza reviewed VUSD's funded ADA, changes in general fund revenues/expenditures from First Interim to Second Interim, the 2023-24 projected Governor's Budget, and reviewed multi-year projections. Mr. Mirza requested the Board adopt a positive certification.

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Second Interim Financial Report as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

**CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT**

**15.a Staffing Update**

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro reviewed a draft base level staffing document dated March 9, 2023. Executive Cabinet Members noted changes that have occurred since the last time this draft was presented to the Board. Ms. Andrea Crouch, Director of Classified Human resources, noted that she is working on reclassifying Office Assistant and Library Tech positions at the elementary school level to fall under a single job classification of ESSA, which will allow for more transfer opportunities and flexibility at the sites. Ms. Crouch noted that health tech positions are more hours than they were pre-Covid, there have been no changes to campus assistants, and a new CASBO formula will be used for custodial FTE at the sites. Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, noted that school counselors at the elementary school level would receive 2 days (.40 FTE) as a base for all sites and that all sites have received a .20 FTE (1 day) reduction in counseling except for Title 1 elementary schools.

The Board noted a concern with the .40 FTE base for school counselors stating that at the recent budget workshop, they discussed a minimum of .80 FTE per counselor per site. The Board suggested getting additional information in a Friday Board Memo that would show a counselor-to-student ratio as a base level for each of the sites. The Board also requested to know the formula used for the counselor ratio as well as the cost associated with having a base for counselors between .40 FTE and .8 FTE.



Staff reviewed base level staffing at the middle school and high school levels. Ms. Crouch noted that a formula was used to staff campus assistants and all other changes align with the elementary level. Ms. Crouch also stated that she is currently working on consolidating job descriptions for the clerical positions at the high school levels and noted that the campus assistants have more FTE hours than pre-COVID.

## **CONFERENCE - BUSINESS SERVICES**

### **16.a Bond Oversight Committee Update**

Assistant Superintendent Mr. Ahsan Mirza noted that Dr. Castro and the Board Bond Subcommittee will meet soon to review the 34 applications received for the Bond Oversight Committee before bringing this item back for Board consideration and approval at the April 18 Board meeting.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve consent items #17 - 21 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

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

## **CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

17.a Approval of 2022-2023 District Industry Advisory Board Roster

17.b Overnight and Out of the Tri-County Field Trips

## **CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

18.a Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2022-23 School Year

18.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year

18.c Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year

18.d Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year

## **CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified**

19.a Classified Position Changes

19.b Release of Probationary Classified Employee

## **CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES**

20.a Permission to Utilize Piggyback and California DGS Contracts for 2022-2023 - Amended

20.b Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts

20.c Ratification of Check Payments

20.d Donations to Ventura Unified School District and Schools

- 20.e Appointment of Representatives to the California Schools Employee Benefits Organization (CSEBO) Board of Directors

## **CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT**

- 21.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

## **BOARD REPORTS**

Trustee Mr. James Forsythe participated in the Read Across Ventura event at Will Rogers, the carnival at Lincoln, the VUSD/City/College Liaison meeting, and the Declining Enrollment Committee meeting, which unfortunately did not meet quorum and will need to be rescheduled.

Trustee Mr. Calvin Peterson attended a recent DELAC meeting where Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) presented on drugs/vaping, the Teacher of the Month celebration at El Camino, and presented with Dr. Soledad Molinar at Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) regarding implementing an African American Parent Committee at their districts.

Trustee Ms. Amy Callahan attended site visits along with Sabrena Rodriguez and Dr. Castro. Ms. Callahan also attended a playoff game at Buena HS and the ACSA Region 16 Women in Leadership Summit where Ms. Dolores Huerta was the keynote speaker. Lastly, Ms. Callahan will be presenting along with Mr. Peterson at the CAAASA conference that begins tomorrow.

Trustee Dr. Jerry Dannenberg went to the Teacher of the Month celebration at El Camino and the Buena WASC visit this past weekend.

Trustee Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez attended the following events: Employee Workforce Housing planning meeting; Buena Music Mixer event; Art's Collaborative meeting; Planning meeting for the Ventura Art Walk (tentative date of September 9); Midtown Community Council meeting; VUSD/City/College Liaison meeting; VC Action meeting on smoking and health; First series for Legislative Action Week; Presentation on the effects of marijuana at VCOE; and the Westside Community Council Meeting ([handout](#)).

## **COMING EVENTS**

Superintendent Dr. Castro shared the following upcoming events;

- African American Parent Committee Meeting – March 15 at 6:00 p.m.
- Teacher of the Month Celebrations
  - March 16 at Buena at 3:00 p.m.
  - March 30 at Loma Vista at 3:00 p.m.
- Special Education District Advisory Committee Meeting – March 31 at 9:30 a.m.
- Spring Break – April 3 – 6, No School; District Holiday – April 7, Schools/District Closed
- Parent Advisory Committee Meeting – April 11 at 9:30 a.m.
- LCAP Advisory Committee Meeting – April 19 at 5:30 p.m.

## **FUTURE BOARD ITEMS**

- Emergency Preparedness - April 18
- Bond Oversight Committee - April 18
- Summer School - April 18

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

Trustee Rodriguez reminded the Board to please review the Board Policies and submit your questions before next week.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

There was no reason to return to closed session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 p.m. until our next regularly scheduled Board meeting to be held on April 18, 2023.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson,  
Mr. James Forsythe

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

APPROVED

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The top signature is more complex and cursive, while the bottom signature is simpler and more horizontal. Both are written over horizontal lines.

President

Secretary