



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
July 20, 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, July 20, 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. /Ed. Services	Dr. Antonio Castro
Asst. Supt./Human Resources	Mr. Brett Taylor
General Counsel	Mr. Anthony Ramos

**Adoption of Agenda**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda, pulling consent item # 22i to be brought back at a future meeting for a more robust discussion.

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

**Public Comment on Closed Session Items**

None.

**Motion to go to Closed Session**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to go to close session at 5:32 p.m.

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

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

**Pledge of Allegiance**

At 7:05 p.m., Board President Velma Lomax called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was held in honor of Ms. Carol Gonzales and Ms. Wendy Novak who both past away in June of this year. Ms. Gonzales was employed by VUSD for almost 22 years, from 1993 until her retirement in 2015. She worked as a Para Educator for many years before becoming a library technician at Ventura High School. Ms. Novak was employed by VUSD for over 18 years until her retirement in June of 2020. After

beginning as a substitute teacher for a few years, she spent the remainder of her years as a teacher at El Camino High School.

#### **Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session**

None.

#### **Superintendent's Report**

##### **11.a Good News**

Dr. Rice introduced the new Assistant Principal of Buena High School Dr. Scott McNutt and welcomed him to VUSD. Dr. McNutt thanked Dr. Rice and the Board, then took a moment to introduce his family.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to the *Rusty Sailors*, the robotics team from Cabrillo Middle School, who recently competed in the First Lego League Regional Championships last December, won the Regional Championships Award, and received a Global Innovations Nomination. Dr. Rice noted that the Rusty Sailors were presented a Southern California Regional Championship Perpetual Trophy which they will keep until next year. The Rusty Sailors were further recognized for putting together a socially distanced Fitness for Food Share Fundraiser that raised more than \$2400 for Food Share Ventura County and who worked hard to clean up and replant the Cabrillo School garden before the students returned to in-person learning. Members of the Rusty Sailors in attendance included: Alisha Ali, Irick Catanach, Saanvi Joshi, Jane Kim, Hendrix Lowder, Izzy Quiroz, and Aditi Shanbhag. Additional shout outs were given to the Rusty Sailors Head Coach JD Sessa and Assistant Coach Laurie Lowder.

#### **Correspondence**

None.

#### **Public Comments**

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

1. Ina Holiday in favor of keeping the name of Junipero Serra Elementary and expressing concerns regarding Critical Race Theory.
2. Sunshine Cox urging the Board to keep all SRO's on campus, to limit the teaching of critical race theory, and urging the Board to make mask wearing optional for students.
3. Dan Nelson\* thanking all VUEA staff for their hard work and dedication, especially to those working throughout their summer. Additionally, he thanked all Principals for their hard work.
4. Carol Peek\* thanking all Extra Support Personnel, especially those working summer school.

#### **CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT**

##### **14.a Board Meeting Processes and Protocols**

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice led a discussion around board processes and protocols to consider opportunities for increased efficiencies. Topics discussed included the location of the meetings, when to return to in-person meetings, the possibility of an earlier start time, initiating an ending time that can be extended through board action, and proposing that we change our "conference" and "action" items to "Information/Action/Discussion." The Board came to a consensus to create an ad hoc committee in order to look at surrounding districts and to gather additional information. It was decided that Trustee Amy Callahan and Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez would be the Board representatives on the committee.

#### **CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

##### **15.a Consideration for Adoption of Science Curriculum for Grades K-5 (Action Requested)**

Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction (K-5), introduced Mr. Brett Klopfenstein, Science Teacher Specialist, to present on *California Inspire Science* curriculum for students in grades K- 5. Mr. Klopfenstein shared that the curriculum was piloted in all grade levels Kindergarten through fifth grade, in English and Spanish, and gave a brief overview of the

NGSS and the VUSD science pilot selection process. A list of strengths for California Inspire Science were discussed.

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 adoption of Science Curriculum for Grades K-5, *California Inspire Science*.

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 for Adoption of a Textbook: The American Pageant, AP Edition (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 adoption of a textbook: *The American Pageant, AP Edition*.

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

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

**CONFERENCE - BUSINESS SERVICES**

**16.a Declining Enrollment Presentation**

Ms. Anna Campbell, Director of Budget and Finance, presented baseline data on declining enrollment, discussed anticipated decline versus actual decline, and revenue loss due to declining enrollment. It was noted that the Thomas Fire in December 2017 and the Pandemic that began in March 2020, increased the rate of declining enrollment more than what was projected. VUSD's current enrollment numbers are 15,742, slightly above the projection of 15,711. A brief overview of how LCFF funding is formulated was discussed.

There was Board consensus to create an ad hoc Declining Enrollment Committee with Trustee Matt Almaraz representing the Board. The committee would then be formed by recruiting members from various stakeholder groups including students, staff, parents and city representatives.

**CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

**17.a Ventura Unified School District and Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) Memorandum of Understanding - Coaches Extra Pay Stipend - June 25, 2021 (Action Requested)**

It was moved by Mr. Matt Almaraz, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Ventura Unified School District and Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) Memorandum of Understanding- Coaches Extra Pay Stipend- June 25, 2021 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**

**18.a Resolution #21-19, Board Reservation of Rights to Improve Compensation for Fiscal Year 2021-22**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #21-19, Board Reservation of Rights to Improve Compensation for Fiscal Year 2021-22 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 CALENDAR**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve as Amended Consent Items #19-22h and 22j-23a, pulling item # 22i to bring back at a later meeting for further discussion.

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**

- 19.a Resolution #21-16, regarding Child Development Services California State Preschool Program
- 19.b Consideration of Anacapa Middle School Unity Mural
- 19.c Overnight and Out of the Tri-County Field trip

#### **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 Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending June 30, 2021.
- 20.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 20.d Ratification of Administration's Approval of Reemployment for Adult Education Teachers & Substitutes
- 20.e Ratification of Administration's Approval of Assignments for 2021 Extended Year - Summer School Programs
- 20.f Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 20.g Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year

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

- 21.a Classified Position Changes

#### **CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES**

- 22.a Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo Legal and Non-Legal Consultant Services Agreement for 2021-24

- 22.b Ratification of Final Settlement Agreement and Release of All Claims Case No. MG202107
- 22.c Ventura Unified School District 2021-22 Facility Use Fee Schedule Categories - Updated
- 22.d Ratification of Change Order #1, C1-22 Lemon Grove Classroom Conversion Project
- 22.e Ratification of Change Order #3, C10-21 Ventura High School Cabling Project
- 22.f Resolution #21-17, Appropriation Transfers for Fiscal Year 2021-22
- 22.g Resolution #21-18, Temporary Loans between District Funds for Fiscal Year 2021-2022
- 22.h Annual Request to Board for Budget and Finance Documents Destruction
- 22.i Disposal of Obsolete and Surplus Equipment
- 22.j Gifts to School District
- 22.k Checks for June 2021
- 22.l Ratification of Purchase Orders (June 8, 2021 to July 6, 2021)

#### **CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT**

- 23.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

#### **BOARD REPORTS**

Trustee Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, thanked the district team who put together the end of the year VUSD social; he shared that it was a great event and that there was a great turn out. Dr. Dannenberg noted his attendance at the Eastside Community Council Meeting, which focused on the completion of Kimball Park. Lastly, he thanked the staff who put together the Fall 2021 Webinar which provided valuable information.

Trustee Amy Callahan thanked the staff for the end of the year social and the Fall 2021 Webinar. Ms. Callahan shared her appreciation for the summer theater production that her daughter has enjoyed being a part of and for the hard work of VUSD staff after such a long year.

Trustee Matt Almaraz thanked the staff for the Fall 2021 Webinar, especially Communication Coordinator Ms. Marieanne Quiroz. Mr. Almaraz noted his attendance at the Eastside Community Council Meeting, where he presented on behalf of AYSO who is hoping to use some of their funds to partner with the community to get Kimball Park finished. Lastly, he thanked all VUSD staff for working so hard throughout their summer for our students.

#### **COMING EVENTS**

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice shared the following upcoming events:

- Special Board Meeting on District Properties: August 5th at 2:00 p.m.
- DELAC Meeting: August 19th at 6:30 p.m.
- Celebrate: VUSD All-Staff Welcome Back Event at Buena, August 24th at 8:00 a.m.
- First Day of School: August 25th
- Parent Advisory Committee Meeting: September 7th at 9:30 a.m.
- LCAP Advisory Committee Meeting: September 22nd at 8:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.
- African American Parent Committee Meeting: September 22nd at 5:30 p.m

President Lomax shared that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Thursday Jul 22, 2021 for the Superintendent Evaluation.

#### **FUTURE BOARD ITEMS**

Study Session: District Properties - August 5

HR Updates - August  
SRO's - August  
CAASPP Data Report- August  
Chaperone Policy/Overnight Fieldtrips - September  
Redistricting - October

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

Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez thanked the teachers and support staff who have given their time this summer to helping our students. Ms. Rodriguez is excited to get our students back in school this fall and to get them where they need to be.

Trustee Matt Almaraz shared that he was excited to go in to a new year fully staffed with a new Executive Team.

Trustee Velma Lomax thanked everyone for their hard work. Ms. Lomax also gave a shout out to Tim Oglesbee from VACE who experienced a tragic loss of a friend of over 20 years.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Board returned to Closed Session regarding Item #6b;no action was taken.


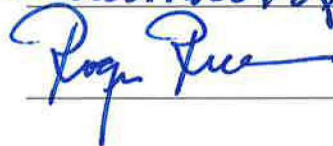
**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 p.m. to the next Regular Board Meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on August 10, 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

Greetings,

I heard of the possibility of changing school names, and would like to address the possibility of a name change for Junipero Serra Elementary School. I was informed that the discussion of possible name changes might occur at the July 20 board meeting.

My three children all attended Junipero Serra Elementary School, and loved it! It would be an absolute shame to change the name of the school because of misconceptions about Father Junipero Serra, whom the school is named after. My children learned about Father Serra from their teachers at the school and from me.

It is a fact that during a difficult time in history, Father Serra helped the natives survive. If it was not for him, many more natives would have perished. The idea that he was a contributor to their demise is a misconception. As educators, you have the responsibility to teach the facts about history and help people understand that they cannot judge people in the past based on present day ideology. The ideology was very different in the past and should not be taken out of context, otherwise, misconceptions occur. Father Serra was ahead of his time in regards to his view of the natives. He did not view them as savages, but as children of God. He worked extremely hard to help them, even defending them against poor treatment by Spanish soldiers. If the Catholic Church did not set up the missions, the Spanish soldiers would have surely annihilated the natives.

I am concerned about the direction that education is taking in regards to teaching about "social justice." It is evident that many events from history have been taken out of context and judged by modern day views. I am concerned that the new "ethnic studies" high school mandate will also take the same misguided direction. Ethnic studies should be covered in history classes already. I remember learning about different ethnicities in my history classes. What has happened? Instead of a new ethnic studies class, why don't high schoolers learn about finances? A class that teaches them how to figure out how much money they need for rent, bills, food, and other expenses, and how to do their taxes, would benefit them so much more.

I am also concerned about "Critical Race Theory" making its way into education. "Critical Race Theory" teaches people to think in terms of race, and is therefore, racist. How can that be allowed in education?

Education is moving away from teaching our children about the basic skills they need in life, which is one of the contributing factors to why children in the United States are falling behind children in other countries in education. With these recent changes, and the pressure to change names based on misconceptions, I am glad that I decided to homeschool my children.

It is bad enough that the city council chose to remove the Father Serra statue that was in front of the city hall building downtown. That was a decision based on misconceptions and pressure from some uneducated individuals. Please do not give in to pressure to change the name of Junipero Serra Elementary School. If you do, you fail as educators to educate people about history, and you allow misconceptions to continue. If that happens, many students will not learn the truth. Let's teach history, not erase history.

Thank you,

Ina Holladay

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** FW: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Board of Education meeting 07/20/21

**From:** Sunshine Cox <renee260702@[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 5:24 PM  
**To:** Public Comment <public.comment@venturausd.org>  
**Subject:** Fw: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Board of Education meeting 07/20/21

---

**From:** Sunshine Cox <[renee260702@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:renee260702@[REDACTED])>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 12:56 PM  
**To:** Public Comment <[public.comment@venturausd.org](mailto:public.comment@venturausd.org)>  
**Subject:** -EXTERNAL SENDER- Board of Education meeting 07/20/21

Good afternoon,

Please consider this my public comment submitted in writing:

1) I urge VUSD to keep SROs on all of our campuses. SROs keep our campuses safe and encourage a good rapport between our students and our law enforcement personnel.

2) I urge VUSD to limit the teaching of racist rhetoric such as critical race theory, ethnic studies or SEL. Those programs should be electives at best and not required. Students already have a full schedule with necessary classes and these divisive programs merely dilute the education our students should be receiving.

3) I urge VUSD to encourage mask-wearing while not requiring it. Wearing a mask ought to be optional for students, particularly if it interferes with learning.

Kindest regards,

Sunshine Cheek

parent of a VHS student