

**San Mateo-Foster City School District**  
**Minutes**  
**CLOSED SESSION/REGULAR MEETING~BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
December 09, 2020, 6:30 PM

Teleconference Meeting via Zoom

Closed Session Begins at 5:30 pm -- <https://zoom.us/j/98936210758> -- Zoom ID: 98936210758

Regular Board Meeting Begins at 6:30 pm -- <https://zoom.us/j/97314272791>-- Zoom ID: 97314272791

To listen to the meetings: One tap mobile +16699009128,,97314272791# US (San Jose)

**1. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 P.M.**

**2. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION**

**2.1. GOVT. CODE 54957.6 CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR(S) Agency Designated Representative: Dr. Joan Rosas. Employee Organization: SMETA, CSEA and/or SMEAA.**

**2.2. GOVT. CODE 54957 - PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE/DISMISSAL/RELEASE.**

**2.3. GOVT. CODE 54957 - Public Employee Performance Goals/Evaluation. TITLE: Superintendent. If these discussions are not completed before 6:30 p.m., the Closed Session will continue following the regular meeting.**

**3. RECONVENE TO REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular meeting convened at 6:33 pm.

**3.1. Report out of Closed Session**

None.

**3.2. Roll Call**

All Board Members were present:

Kenneth Chin  
Noelia Corzo  
Rebecca Hitchcock  
Alison Proctor  
Shara Watkins

**3.3. Approval of Agenda: December 9, 2020 (v)**

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Shara Watkins and a second by Kenneth Chin.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Yes Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

**3.4. Approval of Minutes: November 19, 2020 - Regular (v)**

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Alison Proctor and a second by Kenneth Chin.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Abstain Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

## **4. STATEMENTS**

### **4.1. Public Statements Related to Non-agenda Topics:**

Lynn Azzopardi, a teacher, read a letter written by staff members of her school concerning a recent positive COVID-19 in their site and that they were not informed about it. They are concerned about safety as some teachers use their classrooms to teach in Distance Learning. The teachers feel that it is not safe to return to the campus.

Gabriel Alegre is a 5th grade teacher at Sunnybrae Elementary School. He spoke about concerns with District policy and the delay in communicating with parents and staff of his school site of a student who had tested positive from COVID-19. He stated that two Annex classes were sent home on November 30 and the staff didn't know about it until December 3. He said that teachers are worried that the District Administration is not disclosing information related to cases of COVID-19 infection and they don't have the confidence that the District is prepared to deal with positive cases if we move forward to a Hybrid model. They don't feel safe to return on January 19. He urged the Board to review the communications policy regarding notifications to staff and parents when there has been exposure to COVID-19. He asked that the teachers and staff be given the opportunity to choose to stay in Distance Learning or change to the Hybrid model.

### **4.2. Public Statements Related to Agenda Items: Persons will be called on at the appropriate time**

#### **4.3. Foundation/Committee Reports**

Trustee Proctor attended the Communication Meeting and provided an update on their work.

Trustee Watkins shared that she attended the San Mateo-Foster City Education Foundation (Education Foundation) meeting in late November where they discussed how to plan for the upcoming Read-A-Thon due to the new environment. She introduced Colleen Sullivan, President of the Education Foundation, who gave the wonderful news that Gilead Sciences awarded a grant for \$500,000 to the Education Foundation. Part of the grant will be used for purchasing thermal scanners for each school and the District Office. Larger schools will receive two scanners. They hope to have the scanners by mid January 2021. The other portion of the grant will be used to fund a three-year position for a Teacher on Special Assignment set to begin on July 1, 2021. She thanked both Kate Wilson and Joydeep Glee from Gilead Sciences for their tremendous support and partnership.

Trustee Watkins was appreciative of the news and congratulated the Education Foundation for obtaining the grant.

#### **4.4. Announcements**

Trustee Chin found the virtual California School Board Association conference that was held on November 30 - December 4, very informative. More information will be shared at a future Board meeting. He welcomed back Trustee Hitchcock, who joined the meeting for one more session due to the Board reorganization being scheduled for December 14, 2020.

#### **4.5. Superintendent Report**

Dr. Rosas had a couple of announcements. Reverend Marlyn Bussey will be joining the Equity Task Force, filling the Community Member position that was open. In addition, Jennifer Young, a teacher, will fill the Certificated position that was also open. In addition, Dr. Rosas shared that SEDAC met on December 8 and it was a very informative meeting; they presented information from the Family Resource Center. More information will be shared later in the evening during the Special Education Update presentation. She thanked Colleen Sullivan and the staff from the Education Foundation for obtaining the \$500,000 grant from Gilead and for the tremendous job that they are doing to support the students.

## **5. PROPOSED CONSENT AGENDA (v)**

Item 5.1.2. - Resolution 17/20-21 - Compensation of Board Member for Absence Due To Illness was removed from the Consent Agenda to allow public comments.

**Motion Passed: The amended Consent Agenda** passed with a motion by Rebecca Hitchcock and a second by Alison Proctor.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Yes Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

**Item 5.1.2. Resolution 17/20-21 - Compensation of Board Member for Absence Due To Illness**

Public Comments:

Randi Paynter said that she had not seen a Resolution regarding compensation for a Board member who was absent from a Board meeting before. She wondered about prior practice. She asked if Board members who have been absent in the past have automatically been compensated and if this change was instituted by the District?

Dr. Rosas explained that each Board member receives a stipend of \$400. The stipend is prorated over the number of Board meetings per month. One meeting in a month is \$400, two meetings in a month is \$200 for each meeting. Absences due to illness, jury duty, or if a Board member is doing other Board work and cannot attend a Board, are presented through a Resolution for compensation. Every month, we tally the meetings, check their attendance and pay accordingly. We had to bring a Resolution forward because a Board member was severely ill and could not attend the November 19 meeting. This is the first time the District has brought this forward.

**Motion Passed: Item 5.1.2- Resolution 17/20-21 - Compensation of Board Member for Absence Due To Illness** passed with a motion by Kenneth Chin and a second by Shara Watkins.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Abstain Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

**5.1. SUPERINTENDENT SERVICES/BOARD**

**5.1.1. Compensation Agreement for the Disposition of former Redevelopment Agency properties within the City of San Mateo Pursuant to Health and Safety Code 34180(f)**

**5.1.2. Resolution 17/20-21 - Compensation of Board Member for Absence Due To Illness**

**5.2. BUSINESS/FINANCE**

**5.2.1. Bayside Academy Multipurpose Building Heating System Project-Change Order No. 1 -GY Engineering Inc.**

**5.2.2. Borel Middle School - New Gym and Classrooms - Increment 3 - Change Order #3 - Beals Martin, Inc.**

**5.2.3. Borel Middle School and San Mateo Park Elementary School - Districtwide Security Fencing - Change Order #1 Crusader Fence, Inc.**

**5.2.4. Resolution No. 13/20-21 - Redesignating SMFCSD as the Super USDA Foods Cooperative Lead Agency**

**5.2.5. E-Rate Bid Evaluations Data Services, ISP Services and Bundled ISP Services**

**5.2.6. Architect Pool**

**5.2.7. Contracts & Consultants \$45,000 and Under**

**5.2.8. Listing of Payments to Meet District Expenditures**

**5.3. HUMAN RESOURCES**

**5.3.1. Assignments Noted for Individuals Listed**

**5.3.2. Resignations, Releases, and/or Retirees**

**6. SUPERINTENDENT SERVICES/BOARD**

### **6.1. Reopening Plan Update**

Dr. Rosas and her staff provided an update on COVID-19 statistics and the Reopening Work Plan regarding health and safety, and programming. They also reviewed and discussed the timeline for Reopening.

The Board had various clarifying questions.

#### **Public Comments:**

Ms. Shpizner, an elementary teacher in the District, spoke on behalf of teachers stating that they are not satisfied with the District's response to their concerns. They find the reopening plan not equitable and comprehensive as it doesn't address the specific needs of their school community. They want a healthy and safe environment. They are also concerned that families who didn't respond to the survey were defaulted to Hybrid and felt that there wasn't enough data to determine the families' preference. Another concern they have is the lack of communications from the District when there is a positive COVID-19 case on site and they want more clarity on the mix of cohorts within the schools and school buses. She urged the Board to hear the concerns to ensure a safe return to school.

Julie MacArthur shared that she went to her school, saw a student from her class and it was a joyous moment for her. She wants to be with her students when it is safe to do so. However, she feels that we would not be ready to return on January 19 as we don't have an actionable plan. She had concerns with the plan presented for the middle schools and thought that it cannot be safely executed. An agreement needs to be presented and members need to vote on. She stated that SMETA would not move forward with a plan that is incomplete as it would mean putting students, teachers, and staff at risk. She pointed out that some teachers couldn't join the Professional Development session where details of the Hybrid Plan were being discussed due to technical issues and were only offered to watch the video recording.

Rena Korb is a middle school parent who wanted to address issues about the reopening plan for the middle schools. She thought that the plan was not solid. She stated that she has lost confidence that middle school students would return in Hybrid models. If the District is waiting for the vaccine for the students, the earliest would be late 2021. She feels that she will need to explore other options for her children. She thought that there are many middle school families who want to go back to school, all the District needs to do is survey them to truly measure the families' preference. She asked the Board for a plan.

Randi Paynter shared that she is part of the Safe Return Committee at her elementary school site. She requested that information on the HEPA air cleaners such as brand and model that the District has acquired be available to the public. She questioned the logistics regarding the health screening application and thermal scanners, wondering about the health risks of using thermal scanners and how school sites can make it cancer safe. She asked the Board to follow up with her Cabinet for a plan.

Marcella has children in elementary and middle school and is part of the Site Reopening Committee. She wondered if the middle schools will be considered different in the Reopening Plan. She thought that it would be helpful to have a specific criteria for reopening and closing schools. She was glad to see a plan that addresses students who are struggling but she would also want to see a plan for socialization for the students. She asked the Board to consider middle school students coming back to school in some form or model. She stated that middle school parents were not asked in the survey to come back to Hybrid learning and she thought that that question should have been included.

Amy Platz thought that the District needed data and a plan. The next Board meeting is on January 21 and we cannot wait until February for a plan. She appreciated that the District is addressing the needs of students who are struggling academically but thought that it's time to address the 80% of students who still don't have a chance to come back to campus and that are just surviving and struggling in other ways. She requested to spend the funds on teachers and not on Zoom. She does not want to see Distance Learning for the rest of the school year and asked for a plan for the middle schools.

Vivian D has a child in elementary school. She stated that she is not clear on reopening plans for January 19. She specifically had questions about the assignment of teachers and wondered if the switching of teachers is pending the reopening on January 19. She requested the criteria for the

reopening of the schools. She was also unclear on what is the protocol if a family tests positive of COVID-19. Will it be up to the families to notify their school?

Emma Senf read a letter on behalf of staff of George Hall Elementary School regarding concerns about school reopening. Among the issues expressed included concerns they have with communications and transparency about exposure when someone tests positive. They advocated for staying in Distance Learning and implored the Board and families to reconsider the waiver as we need to keep students and staff safe.

John Farrow appreciated the comments made about having a plan for the middle school students but felt that is not safe to return to school yet. He thought that the Hybrid models that have been presented do not work for middle school. He encouraged staff to stay in Distance Learning and have a plan in the near term. He supports the use of resources for equity groups and students who are struggling. Returning to in-person classes for the middle school students is not feasible or safe.

Yasuo Hirao was appreciative of the District's work and for providing alternative and flexible learning models. He had questions about the timeline for reopening and the date when the Board of Trustees meet next. He felt that the Board needs to meet before January 21 to decide the actual reopening date, unless, otherwise, the return date of January 19 is postponed. He requested that if there is a new timeline, this should be communicated to parents.

GP Huete (Griselda) spoke on behalf of the teachers at Fiesta Gardens stating that they have concerns on the proposed reopening plan, specifically about shuffling teachers and learning a new curriculum. She said that the change in teachers would create a social emotional and physical stress in students and staff. She added that it takes time to build community and establish good relationships with students, reshuffling will impact student learning. She asked the Board to reconsider the Hybrid model and to return to school only when it is safe to do so. She stressed that the Hybrid model only offers three days of in person classes that resemble regular morning school schedules and no additional interaction with the teacher.

Rhiannon (Robert) Hanson , a parent of two students in the District, advocated for the Hybrid model. He thought the COVID-19 virus will still be around in 2021 and that at some point we will have to return to school. He said that his children would benefit from the Hybrid model and expressed appreciation for the plan. He understands that is not perfect; however, it could never be as the situation is changing constantly. He thanked Dr. Rosas and the Board for their hard work.

Jenna Carson requested that the material for presentations be available to the public early on the day of the Board meetings. Regarding education, she thought that it is important to have full all asynchronous Wednesdays for the middle school students. When the County moves to an orange or yellow tier, she would like to see more cohorts on campus and in-person classes for the newcomers at least four days a week, especially for the students that need extra support. She felt that is important to choose a teaching model and have a plan in place to be ready when it's safe to return to school. She shared that other middle schools in the Peninsula have their hybrid plans approved to start in January.

Christy Knott has a daughter in sixth grade at Abbott Middle School. She was appreciative of the District and the Board, the school staff, and administration for supporting the students. She shared that her family has had a positive experience with Distance Learning and will stay in the program until the end of the school year. However, she expressed concerns about the offer of the Hybrid options, especially with teachers working outside their credential area as we are already asking too much of them. She worries about their safety. She wants the teachers to feel valued and respected and added that students would not have a positive experience in the Hybrid model. She asked the Board to listen to the teachers' needs and wants.

Daniella Guadarrama stated her concerns about going back to in-person classes due to the surge in cases nationwide. She wondered about the type of support for the teachers when the schools reopen. She felt that the District is disrupting the sense of stability or normalcy that students had in Distance Learning as they already have a routine, the students already know their teachers and their classmates. She felt that the District should focus on helping students who need assistance and wondered if teachers could change their mind about teaching in Hybrid if the number of cases keeps rising.

Molly Glover Gallatin, a middle school parent, reiterated her disappointment about the lack of a plan for middle school students. She would like to see middle school children return to school when the County has moved to Red or Orange Tier. She said that middle school parents have not been surveyed and asked for a plan and to define a timeline later on.

Colleen H said that her family's choice has been to stay in Distance Learning. She has a child in North Shoreview Montessori and one at Abbott Middle School and mentioned that she has seen how differently both schools deal with education. She shared that she has been communicating with her children's schools and finds it unsatisfactory and disappointing that her 5th grade child only receives one hour at the most of synchronous education daily. She would like to see a bell schedule for elementary students and also recorded lessons.

Daniella, a first grade teacher in the District, spoke about her concerns with the Hybrid Model and the reopening on January 19. She stated there are still details that need to be worked out at the site level and that teachers are feeling stressed and scared. She was especially concerned about the transition period and the preparations for establishing the health and safety protocols, as well as learning a new curriculum for both models. She said that school will be completely different when students return from what their children are used to. She spoke about the challenges that teachers will have when they return to in-person classes and thought that finishing the year in Distance Learning was a better approach. She asked the Board to listen to the teachers' concerns and wanted to inform the Board that teachers were not given the choice to return to in-person classes.

Gabriel, who is in fifth grade at George Elementary School, thought that students should not return to schools yet, pointing out a few reasons, one being that children between the age of 10 – 19 are more likely to get infected with the virus. He thought that fifth grade classes shouldn't be split. He stated that children want to remain at home learning from the same teacher. He gave statistics of people who have been infected and those who have died from the virus worldwide. He felt that his class is performing great; they are learning and connecting with their peers and thought that there is no reason for fifth graders to return to in-person classes.

Melissa, a fifth grade teacher in the District, felt that the District lacks transparency during the Board meetings. She shared that she attended the Reopening Team meeting at her site where they discussed ideas on how students would enter back to the school for the first time but she felt that there was really no room for such discussion or ideas. She said that she was told that there are still many details that needed to be worked out and many hours of meetings to ensure a safe return. She felt that many teachers have concerns about reopening the schools without a proper plan.

Yolanda is a parent at Abbott Middle School. She shared that her daughter is excelling academically but she misses her school. They visited the school and were very appreciative of the in-person contact with the teacher. Yolanda would like to see opportunities for students to connect with their school even for a short visit as it would make a big difference in the children.

Joy was concerned with the high risk of infection during the holidays. She is particularly concerned with reported positive COVID-19 cases at her site. If teachers and students are being asked to come back, she expects that the Board meetings be held in person as well. She thanked the teachers and staff as her 5th grade son is thriving in Distance Learning. She was grateful for the Board of Trustees and the District for their hard work and requested to aim for reopening in the spring or when is safe to return.

Jessica W appreciated the choices the District has given to parents of staying in Distance Learning or opting for a Hybrid model. She felt that Distance Learning is failing the students and that it is possible to keep teachers and students safe from spreading the virus at the schools. She thought that teachers are also considered essential workers.

Christa Hurrell is a North Shoreview Montessori parent. She said that the school is doing an amazing job with Distance Learning. She felt that teachers and staff are working hard to bring back the students. However, we are in the middle of a pandemic and the situation is worsening. She felt that

there is not enough data on how the virus affects children. She reminded everyone of the shuffling of teachers and about new rules and regulations that will be in place when we return to school and that things will not be normal. She thought that resources should be spent in bringing back students of special needs and socioeconomic disadvantaged students as well as strengthening Distance Learning. She encouraged supporting one another during these difficult times.

Vy Vo was not in support for reopening on January 19 and expressed concerns with lack of clarity of on the survey and that some parents were not surveyed. In addition, parents were unable to find the survey questions on their dashboard. She was glad to hear about the plan for elementary schools but thought that January 19 is not the right time for returning since the County is in the Purple Tier. She would like to hear more about a plan for the middle schools that includes teachers' input, as she believes that the District needs to improve Distance Learning. She wanted clarity on the reopening date and the assignment of teachers. She thanked student Gabriel for speaking this evening.

A. Graham agreed with previous callers about the need for a plan for both elementary and middle schools even if we do not reopen the schools on January 19. She felt that schools should reopen when the County moves out of the Purple Tier, whenever that might be. She also agreed that teachers' and parents' input is needed, adding that the High School District already has a plan and that they plan to return to campus when is safe to do so. She suggested a similar plan for middle schools.

KW, a middle school parent and a teacher in the District, thanked the teachers and staff for their hard work and shared that her daughter is doing well in Distance Learning but she would wish to be back on campus; however, she acknowledged that is not safe to return yet. As a teacher, she appreciated the comments made by student Gabriel. She wanted to remind the families who chose the Hybrid model that they would only be receiving two days of in-person learning. It concerns her that students won't be with their teachers for two days every week. She worried about the students' vulnerability and the effects.

Clifford Samoranos, a former District teacher, wanted to acknowledge the tremendous and difficult job that the teachers are doing and voiced his opinion on the reopening of the schools. He thought that putting pressure for a return to school in-person is inefficient as the risk is too high and it sends a message to the teachers that they are not valued.

Kirsten Badella, a LEAD Elementary parent, shared that her son is doing well and that all the teachers at LEAD are great. She felt that teachers are not being valued by asking them to come back in person in an unsafe environment. She asked parents how they feel about knowing that the Hybrid model only offers three days of asynchronous work. Regarding the survey, she wanted to know if a parent didn't answer a question in the portal, did it default to Hybrid? She fears that many parents had trouble navigating due to language barrier or technology issues. She thought that another survey should be sent out. She felt that the school is a controlled environment and with health and safety protocols in place and that following the Four Pillars works, it's safe to go back. To her knowledge, the learning pods are open and there haven't been cases of COVID.

Amelia, a middle school teacher in the District, stated that families are privileged to choose between models but teachers do not have the same choice. She felt that is not safe to return to in person classes. She shared that she was not given the choice of staying in Distance Learning or signing up for Hybrid. Her mother suffers from stage four cancer. She won't be able to visit her because she may have to teach in person, adding that she would seriously have to consider her options. She felt that is not safe and it is not right to return to in-person classes.

Jeame Stewert, a parent of Borel Middle School, requested a forum dedicated to middle school families. A focus group specifically for middle schools would benefit the teachers, the community and the Board. Middle school students are more likely to follow the health and safety protocols. She asked the Board to consider her request.

Arleen Agricola, a Special Needs parent at Abbott Middle School, shared that her family made the decision of staying in Distance Learning as she believes that is not safe to return to school. She added that even in small classes there is still risk of infection. Her son cannot care for himself. Therefore,

she cannot run the risk of her son being exposed to the virus, as she could not isolate him. She is hoping for guidance from the San Mateo County and the CDC as this virus will stay around for months.

Mitchell Cappa, a teacher in the District, shared that she lives with her parents who are over 60 years old and her choice is to stay in Distance Learning. He said that he loves his school and his students but feels there is much risk returning to the school. He added that some of his students attend large gathering on the weekends and that scares him. He also spoke to the need of another parent survey as he believes that parents might not have understood the questions. School won't be the same coming back in the Hybrid model. He asked the Board to consider returning when it's safe.

Karina Wilhelms encouraged everyone to listen to the medical expert panel that was presented by the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District on the reopening schools or visit their website. She found the information valuable as they stated that children don't get infected among themselves or to the teachers. The information was so encouraging to her that she decided to sign up for Hybrid learning. She feels that the loss would be greater if they stay in Distance Learning. She has a relative who reported that in Orange County where they live has no spread of the virus within the school, with the exception of one case as a result of a celebration on a Saturday, not on campus.

Debbie Melamud agreed that middle school parents were not properly surveyed regarding their choice for a learning model. She also believes that not all parents might have responded to the parent survey. She shared that her family is doing well in Distance Learning. Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, she thought that we shouldn't put teachers at risk.

Aubrie Stone, is a frontline worker, was disappointed to hear comments in favor of reopening the schools, adding that COVID-19 is a life threatening virus. She said that she is not willing to jeopardize her family's health over statistics. She agreed that teachers shouldn't be forced to return to school. COVID-19 is a disease that no one wants to have. Her eight-year-old child wanted to go back to school, but due to the surge in cases, he now understands that it is not safe to return.

Valerie Benavides, an elementary and middle school parent and an essential worker, shared that her four-year old has been attending in person at Fiesta Gardens since September and thought that the school is doing an amazing job at following the health and safety protocols. She trusts that as long as we follow the medical professionals' recommendations of keeping social distance, using masks, washing our hands, we would be in a good place. She emphasized that parents who chose the Hybrid model, love their teachers as well and they want to ensure the teachers' safety.

Christie L, a teacher in the District and a parent, is eager to return to school. However, she chose Distance Learning for her daughter after learning that teachers would be shuffled around schools in order to meet the needs of teachers who will be in Distance Learning. She added that we still have to look into the logistics of reopening the schools. She thought that teachers need time to learn the new curriculum, which cannot be done before January 19.

Alate, an elementary and middle school parent, shared that she didn't recall seeing a choice for returning back to school in the middle school survey that she received. In terms of elementary school, she would like to see a new opportunity for parents to reconfirm their choices now that the County is in Purple Tier. She noted that she works for Pfizer and a vaccine would be available to the appropriate people soon. She hopes that we would be able to return to school in a couple of months but for now is not safe to return to in-person learning.

#### Board Comments:

Trustee Hitchcock thanked student Gabriel and said that she appreciates hearing students' voices and their opinions. She requested that the Board Agendas have their respective supporting documents or attachments. She brought up the request of a library recorded lessons and also wondered if, as part of the communications to families and staff, FAQs can be included. Another request she had was to ensure that staff is able to attend Professional Development and that these be available during contracted hours. She thought that a survey with more clear communications and questions be sent out to families and that all communications to parents come directly from the District. She had concerns with unanswered surveys and that the District should pursue responses from the families who did not



return the survey. She wanted to know if the District was working on a Hybrid plan for the middle schools and requested a middle school focus group. Dr. Rosas said that she is working with other superintendents as well as with Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, David Chambliss and his team meet to discuss education models for the middle schools.

Trustee Corzo acknowledged that this is a difficult situation for everybody. Therefore, he felt that everyone's comments, thoughts, and feelings were valid. She had concerns with the schools reopening on January 19 as the County is now in the Purple Tier so she thought that reopening date should be postponed. Her concerns included implications with students that are in Distance Learning and the reshuffling for classrooms because it could create instability for the teachers and students. She wants to see the schools reopen when the County is the Red or Orange Tier because, currently, the risk of infection is too high. She also recognized that the District has been working hard and as a result we are a couple of steps ahead than other districts but she felt frustrated at the lack of leadership at the state and national level, in addition to the inconsistency in the way districts are using different criteria for reopening their schools.

Trustee Watkins stressed that she would like to see more data to make informed decisions. She thought that it's important for the Board to be in alignment as there is so much conflicting information out there. Moreover, San Mateo County is now in the Purple Tier and that is the information they have at the moment so, she didn't think that is helpful as a Board for a safe return. One metric that she considers useful is using the Red Tier for return since it does not require a waiver. She talked about how difficult the pandemic has been on families. She wanted to get clarity this evening on what it means, "to safely return" to schools. She brought up the survey and the need to have clear data. At the moment if families change their choice it would be difficult for the District to reconfigure the classes. She noted that is a complicated matter but she did want to know the number of people that responded to the survey as that would be a factor in their decision-making. Another decision factor for Trustee Watkins is equity. She felt that in general we don't have a clear plan and that she is concerned about the most vulnerable students and the middle school children. She talked about uncertainty and how scary it could be returning to the schools but there are steps that we can take to inspire confidence such as having a solid plan, including strong health and safety protocols, having a site plan, having filters installed in the classrooms, and having a live FAQs document listed in the communications web page. She insisted on the need of defining alignment what it means to return safely and the type of information needed.

Trustee Proctor found that it is important to figure out what the circumstances are to feel comfortable in reopening the schools and determine a threshold for transparency and ease anxiety among families and teachers. Thus, making teachers and parents feel that they are on the right path. She addressed the concerns that teachers have about the District not being ready to reopen. She appreciated that the District has started a plan for the middle schools but she felt that there is more to be done. She wanted to know at what tier level would be comfortable for bringing back middle school students in the Hybrid model. She brought up the need of data for the first trimester grades and comparison data from last year, to current, and the total number of students (sorted by grade level, by school, by subject) to see what areas the middle schools are struggling the most. In addition, she asked for information on the total number of students that are in the Learning Support Hubs, and how many would be in the Wednesday Cohort. She thought that middle school families should be surveyed and getting the input from some students would be important as well for developing a plan to bring them back to school. She mentioned that the Communications Committee is working on developing FAQs but the Handbook that will come out in the winter would also answer many of the questions that parents and staff have. She agreed to postpone the reopening date and come back to school when it's safe but also thought that it is important to have a plan for the middle school students.

Trustee Chin began his comments with additional clarifying questions such as wanting clarification on parents who didn't respond to the survey and they were defaulted, and he asked, did the District make a personal contact with them? Dr. Rosas will verify the information with her administrators, as she understood that they would default to Hybrid. Trustee Chin continued his comments by requesting that an item be placed on the Board agenda to talk specifically about middle schools. He too recognized that these are difficult times and that the Board and the District is trying to figure out the two programs, Distance Learning and Hybrid. Parents have commented on the situation and come from different sides of the spectrum and he sympathizes with them. He shared that his oldest child would stay with

his teacher and his daughter was enrolled in Hybrid. He feels conflicted about it but they as family made the decision with information they had at that time. He offered to give up his Hybrid spot if someone needs it, adding that everyone has to make their choices with the information at hand. Similarly, he explained how the Board made the decision in the summer to go into Distance Learning based on the information they had at that time and staff and teachers have worked hard since then at improving the program. The District has also opened Learning Support Hubs for students who need extra assistance. It is the District's goal to bring everyone back to school in a safe manner as we know that students learn best in the classrooms and in person. He said that we could have opened last October but he agreed that logistically we weren't prepared. He expressed appreciation for all the teachers for their hard work, noting that he understands their feeling afraid of going back to the classrooms. For him it is important to look at the science and the question is how safe is to return to the classrooms. He shared that he too listened to the conference given by a panel of expert doctors, put together by Belmont-Redwood Shores School District, where they talk about revised information on ways that the virus transmits, explaining for example that the virus doesn't transmit through surfaces and it would take someone to sneeze 100 times to get infected with COVID-19; therefore, schools are not spreaders. He was concerned that by delaying the reopening of the schools any further we would be getting closer to the end of the school year. So, he thought that it's best to keep January 19 as the reopening date. Lastly, he suggested that anyone who would like to help to please reach out to the principals, teachers, and staff to offer support.

The Board discussed whether they should reopen as planned on January 19 and the consensus of the Board was to wait until San Mateo County returned to the Red Tier.

## **7. EDUCATION/STUDENT SERVICES**

### **7.1. Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services Plan (CCEIS)**

Dr. Sarah Drinkwater, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Alma Ellis, Director of Special Education Services, presented information about the Special Education Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services Plan (CCEIS). They reviewed various areas of the Special Education Audits, the definition of significant disproportionality, and the four phases of the CCEIS process, as well as the timeline and next steps.

The Board asked various clarifying questions.

#### **Public Comments:**

Marcella McCullum appreciated the presentation and the time devoted to develop the outcomes of the CCEIS program. As Trustee Watkins stated, Marcella also wanted to know who and how many were identified disproportionately for Special Education. She commented on the Root Cause-Measurable Outcomes and cautioned the District about disproportionality, adding that this can generate fear among families that were previously identified as such, which could lead to a lack of services, more specifically in bilingual families. She would like to see that Professional Development includes specialized training for Special Education Specialists and contracted employees.

Chelsea Bonini had questions about the number of students that were identified and if they were accurately identified for Special Education Services and if there was any impact as result. She also wanted to know what was the measurable number that was determined.

#### **Board Comments:**

Trustee Corzo appreciated the time, effort, and analysis that went into the presentation. She thought that the root cause analysis was objective. She is looking forward to the next steps. She shared her experience in working with Spanish speaking families and her participation in IEPs at various school districts and noted that families often feel overwhelmed, frustrated, and at times are unsure of what questions to ask but they trust the system. She believes that this is related to barriers that they face and perhaps it is cultural. She would like to have more discussion on the third root cause analysis as she felt that it affects specific groups of people and it could lead to bias in the outcome and patterns in the Special Education Department. Dr. Drinkwater appreciated Trustee Corzo's comment on the Root Cause Analysis #3 and said that stakeholders discussed it during the data analysis. It wasn't always a comfortable discussion but the data was clear.

Trustee Watkins agreed with Trustee Corzo and added that she is glad to see that important conversations are happening and that stakeholders are being included in the work. She talked about the need to discuss implicit bias in an explicit way and make it the forefront of the work, adding that we have arrived at a point where these types of conversations as a District are not always pleasant but there is the need to address race in school and student discipline and how to intersect with Special Education. She wondered if there is a place for students to write their thoughts or voice their comments so they feel that they have been a part of the process and to include them in the work. She had the same request for educators, staff, and administrators for a more diverse stakeholder group and full representation. She is looking forward to hearing more about the work and the involvement of the community and how the work will be integrated into the audit work.

Trustee Corzo also thought that it would be beneficial to conduct focus groups or partner with AbilityPath for further engagement. It's important to make space for certain demographic groups so that they are included and able to contribute. In addition, we need to keep them engaged.

Trustee Proctor added that she appreciated the detailed presentation and learning about the process. She said that she is looking forward to the next steps and hearing more about it.

Trustee Hitchcock said that she is happy to learn that things are making progress and thanked the Special Education team for their work.

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **8.1. Certificated Seniority List (v)**

Sue Wieser, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presented the updated 2020-2021 Certificated Seniority List and asked the Board for approval.

**Motion Passed:** IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE UPDATED CERTIFICATED SENIORITY LIST FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR, AND RECOGNIZES THAT FURTHER CORRECTIONS MAY BE MADE IF NECESSARY. Passed with a motion by Kenneth Chin and a second by Shara Watkins.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Yes Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

### **8.2. Renewal of Employment Contract for Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources (v)**

Dr. Rosas presented the renewal Employment Contract for Sue Wieser, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, adding that it is her distinct pleasure bringing this contract forward for Board approval as Ms. Wieser goes above and beyond in her work to support staff and labor relations in the District. Dr. Rosas respectfully requested the approval of Ms. Wieser's employment contract renewal.

Public Comments:

Marcella, a parent, an educator, and a trainer of future teaching staff, expressed her appreciation for Ms. Wieser's work in the District. She added that Ms. Wieser works with an equity lens and focuses on hiring staff whose values are in alignment with the District's values. She was happy to see a contract renewal for Ms. Wieser.

Board Comments:

Trustee Watkins also expressed appreciation for Ms. Wieser's work.

**Motion Passed:** IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES RENEW THE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES. Passed with a motion by Kenneth Chin and a second by Noelia Corzo.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Yes Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock

Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

## 9. BOARD MEMBER STATEMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Trustee Corzo thanked Trustee Hitchcock for attending the Board meeting this evening. Her last meeting would have been on November 19.

Trustee Chin wished Trustee Watkins well on the impending birth of her baby. He thanked Trustee Corzo for managing the many and long meetings during her time as Board President, especially during the pandemic. He also thanked Dr. Rosas and her staff for the work. He wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Trustee Hitchcock was appreciative for the parents' participation in the long meetings as well as the teachers for their love and dedication toward the students. In her eyes, the teachers and parents in the District are superheroes. She also had words of appreciation for Dr. Rosas and her administrative staff for working non-stop during these difficult times. She wished everyone a pleasant winter break.

Trustee Corzo thanked Trustee Hitchcock for her time served and her contribution to the Board. She will be missed.

Trustee Proctor thanked the San Mateo-Foster City Education Foundation for their hard work and to Gilead Sciences for their generosity. She, too, thanked Trustee Hitchcock for her work as a Trustee and wished everyone happy holidays.

## 10. FUTURE MEETING DATES

December 14, 2020	6:30 PM	Special Board Meeting
December 15, 2020	7:00 PM	Equity Task Force
January 11, 2021	7:00 PM	SMFCSD Education Foundation
January 12, 2021	7:00 PM	Equity Task Force
January 21, 2021	6:30 PM	Regular Board Meeting
January 25, 2021	7:00 PM	Executive Council Meeting - PTA
January 26, 2021	9:00 AM	School Visitations
January 26, 2021	7:00 PM	SEDAC
January 30, 2021	1:00 PM	Board Study Session

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

### 11.1. Adjournment (v)

The Regular Board Meeting adjourned at 12:06 am.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Shara Watkins and a second by Rebecca Hitchcock.

Yes Kenneth Chin  
Yes Noelia Corzo  
Yes Rebecca Hitchcock  
Yes Alison Proctor  
Yes Shara Watkins

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Board Secretary

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Date