

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING December 14, 2021 Approved MINUTES

Call to Order

In accordance with Governor Newsom's executive orders of social distancing due to the COVID-19, the Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, December 14, 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 Regular Board meeting was made available through the Ventura Adult and Continuing Education, TDC Studios YouTube Channel or via Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86362857393? pwd=TWdsUElyRVRIUjZmUGMzSURNdnJOUT09. 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. /Bus. Services Ms. Rebecca Chandler Asst. Supt. /Ed. Services Dr. Antonio Castro Asst. Supt/HR Mr. Brett Taylor

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda with the following change: Consent item numbers were changed from 18-22 to 17-21.

Mr. Anthony Ramos

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

Velma Lomax

General Counsel

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

Public Comment on Closed Session Items

None.

Motion to go to Closed Session

It was moved by Mr. Matt Almaraz, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:32 p.m.

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

Velma Lomax

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

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

At 7:06 p.m., Board President Velma Lomax called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. A Moment of Silence was held to honor Mr. Seay, a beloved teacher and coach who passed away in October. Mr. Seay coached wrestling for 14 years, boy's track for 15 years, was an assistant football coach for 10 years and taught

physical education, health science, peer counseling and biology throughout his 36 years at Buena High School. Coach Seay was known for his warm smile, kindness, positive coaching style, and caring for others.

Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session

None.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

11.a Annual Organizational Meeting of the Governing Board - Election of Officers (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 Mr. Matt Almaraz as the Board President.

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

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

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve to approve Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez as Board Vice-President.

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

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

11.b Presentation to Outgoing Board President, Mrs. Velma Lomax

Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, on behalf of the Executive Team, had the honor to recognize and present a gift of appreciation, to outgoing Board President Ms. Velma Lomax.

11.c Selection of Dates and Times of Regular Scheduled 2022 Board of Education Meetings (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 as Amended the 2022 Board of Education meeting schedule, removing April 26, 2022 from the list of meeting dates.

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

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

11.d Certification of School Board Representation for the County Committee on School District Organization (Action Requested)

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve Ms. Velma Lomax as the School Board representative to vote in election for members of the County Committee.

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

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

11.e Board Representation of Board Appointed Committees

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Board Representation of Board Appointed Committees with the following revisions: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez will represent DELAC and Mr. Matt Almaraz will be the alternate; Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez will be removed from PAC and Dr. Jerry Dannenberg will be added to PAC; lastly there will be a future ad hoc committee for the Bond.

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

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

11.f Certification of Signatures (Action Requested)

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the Certification of Signatures as presented.

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

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

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice shared that he appreciated the opportunity to visit several of the VUSD sites with Dr. Cesar Morales, Superintendent of Ventura County Schools. Dr. Rice thanked the principals and teachers at Junipero Serra, Lemon Grove, Will Rogers, Cabrillo and E.P. Foster.

Dr. Rice introduced Anne Campbell, the Board's representative to the Personnel Commission to give a quick update. Ms. Campbell shared that staffing continues to be an issue, however HR is doing a great job with advertising and holding job fairs. Ms. Campbell encouraged anyone who is interested in working for VUSD to visit https://www.venturausd.org/hr/HumanResources/Jobs.aspx

Dr. Rice took a moment to introduce the new Director of Student Support Services, Ms. Maria Elizarraras, Ms. Elizarraras took a moment to thank the Board and introduced her family.

Dr. Rice congratulated Buena High School (BHS) Coach Ryan Bolland and the BHS football players for making it to the CIF Finals. He expressed how proud he was of the team for putting in the hard work, their sportsmanship and their tenacity. He then gave individual shout outs to coaches and several players for the awards they received.

Dr. Rice recognized the 2021 Awesome in Autism award recipient, Ms. Allison McKay, from DATA Middle School. He shared that he was able to honor her at a recent staff meeting at DATA.

Dr. Rice shared that VUSD recently received a 2021-22 Strong Workforce Grant in the amount of \$843,000, to fund organic agriculture from farm to table to the world. The grant will be used to support Sa'aliyas Ranch as well as to support K-8 students to participate in robust learning experiences at the ranch, and for upgrades to the farm lab at Ventura High School.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to Dr. Rene Rickard, Chief Innovation Officer, Mr. Joe Bova, CTE Principal on Special Assignment, and the CTE students at DATA and Foothill High School, for their work downtown this past Saturday selling their handmade and machine made products to the community.

Dr. Rice congratulated the robotics team at Atlas Elementary as they participated in their very first Lego Robotics event and won an award *Against All Odds*. He also congratulated Cabrillo's Rusty Sailors, who competed in the California Southern First Lego League statewide competition and won an invitation to the Global Innovation Awards for their invention.

Dr. Rice gave an update on Cheers for Children, which assisted over 425 VUSD families with a \$50.00 gift card to Target to buy food and other essential items. To date, Cheers for Children has raised close to \$15,000 towards their goal of \$25,000.

Dr. Rice congratulated our three Poinsettia Award recipients: Valeria Valdez, Primary Student of the Year, Zoe Bellanca, Secondary Student of the Year, and Julie Crist, Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Rice gave a shout out to our 12 VUSD pre-Engineering graduates.

Student Board Members Mateo Navarro, representing Ventura High School, Nina Segura, representing VACE, and Ella Haas representing Buena, shared brief updates on the exciting things happening at their school sites.

Correspondence

13.a Ventura County Office of Education

Receipt of Disclosure of Collective Bargaining Agreement for the tentative agreement with the VESPA bargaining unit.

Public Comments

The following individual(s) gave a public comment via email or via Zoom*:

Michelle Johnston regarding VUSD's mask policy and holding vaccine clinics on our campuses.

ACTION ITEMS

15.a 2021-22 First Interim Financial Report

Staff presented an overview of the first interim report for the General Fund and discussed assumptions used for projections for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. A 2021-22 Ventura Unified Budget Cycle Timeline was also discussed. A Positive Certification was requested.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve the 2021-22 First Interim Financial Report as presented.

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

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

15.b 2021-26 Educator Effectiveness Grant Funding Plan Adoption

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the 2021-26 Educator Effectiveness Grant Funding Plan as presented.

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

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

15.c Administrative Recommendation for Student Expulsion

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the administrative recommendation for student expulsion #22-06.

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

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

15.d <u>Declining Enrollment Committee</u>

Dr. Rebecca Chandler, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, gave an update on the Declining Enrollment Committee representatives. Dr. Chandler shared that they have secured two representatives from each area and one alternate, and two representatives from the city, which includes one city council member and one staff member. Dr. Rice noted that during the last City/VUSD/College Liaison meeting, Dr. Vega would also like to participate as a representative. The Board shared the following concerns: Overrepresentation from Montalvo, relative of a Board member being selected, wanting a third principal who is experiencing declining enrollment to participate.

There was Board consensus to have Trustee Lomax and Trustee Almaraz serve as the Board representatives for this committee. There was also Board consensus to remove Ms. Dice from the list, add Mr. Vega from the VCCCD, approach Mr. Todd Tyner as a possible third principal to be on the committee, add two staff members from the city – to be determined, and add one or two additional parent from either Portola or Junipero Serra. The Board requested an updated list to be sent in a future Friday Letter.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve as Amended the final representation on the Declining Enrollment Committee with the noted changes.

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

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

15.e Consideration of Approval for the DRAFT 2022-23 and 2023-24 School Year (SY) Calendars It was noted that the VESPA and VUEA calendar committee develops the calendars. Once they receive Board approval, VUEA and VESPA send the calendars out to all members for their approval.

The Board led a discussion around "non contact days," clarifying which employees are required to work and whether employees are paid for those days. The Board had additional questions regarding other religious holidays that they believe used to be considered a board holiday and would like to have a robust conversation in the future around equity.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 3-2 to approve the draft 2022-23 and 2023-24 School Year calendars as presented.

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

15.f Consideration of Resolution #21-29, Continuing Board of Trustees Authority to Hold Virtual Meetings Pursuant to AB 361.

Superintendent Dr. Roger Rice and Ms. Marieanne Quiroz, Director of Communications and Public Information Officer, gave a brief update on where we are in the process of returning to in-person board meetings. Currently, City Hall has not opened up the Chamber for VUSD to use. Ms. Quiroz has been working with the Ventura Police Department (VPD) to secure a new location and to purchase the necessary equipment so that we can continue to live stream our meetings. VACE is not an option due to security risks, the government center is not available, and school sites are not a great option because it would be a two to three day process and very disruptive. We are currently looking into using the multipurpose room at the ESC which could accommodate us with a few modifications. VPD will provide two School Resource Officers (SRO's), however we will also need additional security at the guard shack and in the hallways.

It was moved by Ms. Velma Lomax, seconded by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve Resolution #21 -29, continuing Board of Trustees authority to hold virtual meetings pursuant to AB 361, as presented.

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

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

15.g Consideration of Approval of Increasing the Daily Rate of Certificated Substitute Salary Schedule

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Velma Lomax and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve an increase in the daily rate of certificated substitute salary, effective January 1, 2022 for the remainder for the 2021-22 school year as presented. The Board asked that additional incentives be brought back to a future board meeting for discussion/approval.

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

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

CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT

16.a Redistricting

Mr. Anthony Ramos, Legal Counsel for VUSD, and Mr. Josh Chism from Cooperative Strategies, presented information and led a discussion with the board regarding the post-census analysis of the District's current trustee area map. Two Scenario maps were presented to their board for their consideration. There was board consensus to post these two scenarios on our district website and to provide a place for public comment. There was also board consensus to add a public hearing to our January 11, 2022 board meeting for additional public feedback. Lastly, there will be intentional outreach to the stakeholder groups in the areas affected by the proposed changes.

16.b Board Priorities for the 2022-23 School Year

There was board consensus to table this item until January due to the late hour of the meeting.

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 as Amended consent items # 17 through 21, with the exception of one line item in consent # 20 b for 805 Data and Analytics, to be brought back at a future board meeting.

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

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

CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

17.a Overnight, Out of the Tri-County and Ratification Field Trips

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

- 18.a Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2021-22 School Year
- 18.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Substitute
 Teachers for the 2021-22 School Year
- 18.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 18.d Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2021-22 School Year
- 18.e Ratification of Administration's Approval of Reemployment for Adult Education Teachers & Substitutes
- 18.f Ventura County Office of Education Quarter 1 Williams Report 2021-22 Fiscal Year

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

- 19.a Revisions to Exempt Salary Schedule
- 19.b Classified Personnel Changes
- 19.c Classified Position Changes

CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES

- 20.a Ratification of Change Orders
- 20.b Ratification of Purchase Orders
- 20.c Ratification of Check Payments

- 20.d Donations to Ventura Unified School District and Schools
- 20.e Consideration of Ventura High School Pool Deck Shed Murals and Graham Pool Signage Beautification

CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT

21.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD REPORTS

None.

COMING EVENTS

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

FUTURE BOARD ITEMS

- School Climate & Culture January
- G.O. Bond January
- Legislative Update January
- Sub Incentives January
- Contract Review (805 Evaluation & Analytics) January
- Student Board Members January
- LCAP February
- Study Session Budget & Board Priorities TBD

Board Members requested an analysis of VUSD's legal expenses relative to other school districts in a Friday Letter. The Board would also like to craft a shared vision and mission statement for the District in the near future.

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS - (No official action will be taken) None.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 5-0 to approve to go back into closed session at 11:35 p.m.

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

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

No action was taken in closed session.

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 12:01 a.m. to the next Regular Board Meeting on January 11, 2022.

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

Velma Lomax

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

APPROVED

Secretary

esident

From: <u>Michelle Johnston</u>
To: <u>Public Comment</u>

Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Please Read Board Meeting
Date: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 4:07:06 PM

December 14, 2021

Dear Board of VUSD,

I am writing to you as both an educator in our district, a parent of three grown children, and a concerned citizen. I was also fortunate to be a student in our district, attending J.Serra, Anacapa, and Ventura High School. I think back to my days as a student and I have to say that I am very grateful to many wonderful educators who taught me, but also challenged me to be a critical thinker. I am a problem solver and a critical thinker. It is with these skills and a heavy heart that I can't be silent anymore.

I have spent 27 years in our district and I have taught every grade kindergarten through 5th grade. I know first hand the importance of socialization and learning that must take place in the early years of school that will be foundational for the rest. I am currently teaching kindergarten and love working with these enthusiastic, bright-eyed kids! It is truly a joy, and exhausting, but I love it.

I am very concerned about the impact masks are having on our children, especially the youngest ones. Surprisingly, many students have adapted quite well to the mask, but at what price? I am trying to teach children to read and make sounds. They can't see my lips moving to create sound and I can't see theirs. I can see their eyes, but I can't see their facial expressions. Social cues are very important in human development. All day long I am "policing" the masks. Masks tear. Masks are wet. Kids break them. Kids lose them. Kids chew them. Kids tell me they have snot in theirs. They pick their nose under them. I could go on and on. We have no standards really about the quality of the masks, but supposedly they are helping limit the spread of the virus? I say maybe because there really haven't been any studies that solely look at masking as the only variable and scientifically studying the effectiveness. My own gut tells me children have more to lose than gain from masks. Many studies show the risks of air quality issues, social issues, and communication losses outweigh the benefit of any safety attributed to them. Is a cotton mask, wet from saliva, really beneficial? Perhaps our board could consider having parents sign waivers to relinquish district liability and allow their child to be in class without masks. Once again, are we following the science when students and staff are wearing masks while indoors?

If I listen to the mainstream media and Dr. Fauci, then I might think it's necessary to "vaccinate" our youngest. From the beginning as I analyzed and listened with a critical ear, I knew things were not adding up. How could hugging a person spread this disease? A 10

second embrace was contagious? Why were doctors that were treating patients with ivermectin, zinc, and antibiotics being silenced? Why were citizens supposed to stay inside and avoid exercise? The benefits of vitamin D were being ignored. All the positive, healthy choices we could make were never given any merit. If you listen to alternative sources of information, you will learn that it's the protocols in our hospitals that led to death. Isolation led to death. People need human interaction. People need all the remedy options they can have to get well. I don't see that happening in our state. I see the fear being pushed, vaccines being touted as the only remedy, and life saving medications that have been safely used all over the world unattainable in the greatest nation on earth. Why?

Secondly, I am very saddened by our district's choice to hold vaccine clinics on our elementary campuses. Kids are not at risk and they haven't been throughout the pandemic. We do not know the long term impact of this vaccine. It is technically not even a vaccine. The definition was changed in this pandemic. People can STILL get the virus with or without the "vaccine." One vaccine dose is not enough. VAERS in this past year has shown that something is very wrong. People trust the school system. They assume their child is safe when they go to school. Can we say with 100% percent confidence that these "vaccines" are safe for kids? Has this "vaccine" been rigorously studied like all those in the past?** I don't care what percentage of parents have called and requested a vaccine, we need to refer them to a public agency and wash our hands of any direct involvement with the vaccine. There are too many red flags with side effects in the 12+ years old range to justify holding any clinics on any of our campus sites.

As I have studied and researched with a critical lens, I can say with certainty this isn't just about health and wellness. Masking, lockdowns, censorship, and the assault on free speech, medical autonomy, and the silence of remedies that have worked, shows me there are other agendas at play. Step up and do some research. Start looking at the other schools in our country that have had school open all last year. Look at the masked versus the unmasked. I believe someday in history psychology books will be written about the negative impact on children from the Covid madness. When will we push back and really stop doing what is not socially, mentally, and physically damaging?

Thank you for reading this letter and considering what we can do to help keep our children well in all ways.

Sincerely,

Michelle Johnston

SOURCES TO CONSIDER:

Did you know?

https://unityprojectonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Did You Know Fact Sheet.pdf

Dr. Peter McCollough Discusses Myocarditis

https://www.facebook.com/groups/630775897617332/permalink/861995867828666/

https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/08/the-science-of-masking-kids-at-school-remains-uncertain.html

https://americasfrontlinedoctors.org/videos/post/natural-immunity-from-covid-is-the-best-defense-by-dr-ryan-cole/

** I highly suggest listening to this speech from Dr. Scot A Youngblood, MD https://www.instagram.com/tv/CV0Ksn3Aof-/?utm_medium=copy_link

https://www.facebook.com/groups/6937064686318891/permalink/7115683101790381/

tinyurl.com/OSHA-Facts