



Ventura Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
January 10, 2023
ADOPTED MINUTES

Call to Order

The Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at the ESC Board Room, where one or more members participated. The public had the opportunity to submit their public comment in person. The public streaming of the Regular Board meeting was made available through the Ventura Unified School District YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/@VenturaUnifiedSchoolDistrict/streams>. Those in attendance were:

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

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda with the following amendment: Item 14.d was amended to include the title and author from the previous December 13, 2022 board item: Stamped by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi.

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

Public Comment on Closed Session Items

There was no public comment on closed session items.

Motion to go to Closed Session

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 6:04 p.m.

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

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

At 7:07 p.m., Board President Sabrena Rodriguez called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was held for Jesus Arechiga, a junior at Pacific High School, and Antony Moctezuma Cardona and Augustin (Agy) De Paz Perez, graduates of Pacific High School. Ms. Rodriguez also gave recognition to the passing of Mr. Ron Lomax, husband of former Board Member Ms. Velma Lomax.

Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session

None.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro congratulated 18 VUSD students, who were selected from thousands of middle school and high school students across the state, to participate in the 2023 All-State Honor Ensembles.

Dr. Castro introduced several new VUSD Staff Members including Mr. Ahsan Mirza, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Mr. Thomas Kranzler, Executive Director of Technology Services, and Ms. Sandy Echeveste-Corona, Principal at Juanamaria Elementary School. Staff took a moment to thank Dr. Castro and the Board and to introduce family members in attendance.

Dr. Castro recognized the VUSD Gratitude Award recipients for December. The Gratitude Awards were designed to recognize exceptional VUSD teachers, employees, volunteers, students, and administrators. There were a total of 49 submissions that will receive a certificate of acknowledgment. Five individuals were randomly selected to also receive an Amazon gift card.

Student Board Member Ms. Irene Kim, representing El Camino High School, gave a brief update on the exciting things happening at her school site. Student Board Members Ms. Lily Shadden and Mr. Alex Castro were absent from this meeting.

Correspondence

None.

Public Comments

The following individuals gave a public comment:

1. Sebastien Declerck regarding concerns with the increase of students at Pacific High School (PHS).
2. Pete Ippel regarding concerns with PHS class sizes being above the CDE recommendation.
3. Doug Kidwell regarding concerns with the increase of students at PHS and the need for seniors to get the classes they need to graduate.
4. Charlotte DePaolo regarding concerns with increased class size at PHS, the possibility of opening a second PHS location, and about the "Academy" at VHS, which she believed, can serve students well.
5. Gene Badstubner thanking former Trustee Velma Lomax for her service, regarding his concern about the original 1% raise offered to staff and his concern over transgender students playing sports on their non-biological team.
6. Deborah Meyer-Morris congratulating Trustee Forsythe and welcoming him to his new role; regarding her concerns about civic equity for students with disabilities; regarding VUSD surplus properties and her hope that VUSD would consider inclusive housing; noting a \$35,000 check for an attorney regarding SPED issues and concerned about the families that cannot afford to hire an attorney.
7. Ben Kohn regarding agenda item 14.b, against the approval of the supplemental novel *Stamped*.
8. Anne Whatley regarding item 16.b, advocating for a transparent process in communicating plans and stakeholder engagement with regards to upcoming bond projects.
9. Dan Nelson thanking his colleagues at PHS for advocating for their students; welcoming the new VUSD staff; requesting employee input on bond projects; and regarding a "passing through" of state-allocated COLA increases for future negotiations. In addition, regarding item 15.a, he shared concerns that the library technicians were not included on the draft 2023-24 VUSD Base Staffing sheet.
10. Anthony Ventura regarding item 14.a, commending the Board for putting the bond on the ballot and sharing the need for trades workers.
11. Pedro Toscano regarding item 14.a, congratulating the Board on the bond that will allow the modernization of our schools and inviting staff to tour their training facilities.
12. Scott Zimmerman regarding item 14.a, congratulating the Board on the bond stating students will be encouraged by having the right tools. Also advocating for the need to identify students who are good at working with their hands and getting them involved with construction.
13. Alex Perez regarding item 14.a. congratulating VUSD on the bond and sharing how the changes will encourage students to do better. He also thanked his teammates for walking in the community to support the bond.
14. Jonathon Duran regarding item 14.a, in support of the Career Connections Program, encouraging students to have a pathway into their program; looking for a partnership with VUSD.
15. Marco Cueras regarding item 14.a, with concerns about the duties of the Bylaws.
16. Stephen Schafer regarding item 15.a, would like the board to understand the historical backgrounds of the surplus properties and noting that the Ventura Conservancy would like to be part of the conversation.
17. Helen Eloyan, regarding item 15.a, on behalf of the Westside Innovative Housing Solutions Program, sharing she would love to work alongside VUSD with a potential use of the Avenue School.

ACTION ITEMS

14.a Consideration of Resolution #23-01, Resolution of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District Certifying to the Board of Supervisors of Ventura County All Proceedings in the November 8, 2022, General Obligation Bond Election. (First Reading)

Administrative Mentor Dr. Jeff Baarstad shared that the Resolution notifies the Board of Supervisors, that VUSD intends to market and sell bonds, and that we will be looking to them for legal oversight in this process. Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro noted that the Resolution is a legal requirement.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23- 01, Resolution of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District, certifying to the Board of Supervisors of Ventura County, all proceedings in the November 8, 2022, General Obligation Bond Election as presented.

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

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Amy Callahan. Abstain: None.

14.b Consideration of Resolution #23-02, Resolution of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District Establishing the Measure E Citizens' Oversight Committee and Adopting Committee Bylaws (First Reading)

Administrative Mentor Dr. Jeff Baarstad stated that the Bond Oversight Committee will serve as auditors, to assure that bond funds are used on bond projects. He noted that the committee must have a total of seven members from the following categories:

- One member who is active in a business organization representing the business community located within the school district.
- One member who is active in a senior citizen's organization.
- One member who is the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school district.
- One member who is the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school district and is active in a parent-teacher organization.
- One member who is active in a bonafide taxpayer's organization.

Board President Rodriguez suggested increasing the committee size from 7 to 11, allowing more community feedback. Board Members Forsythe & Peterson suggested having one community member from each of the 5 trustee areas. Dr. Castro suggested to the Board that they consider adopting a Board subcommittee regarding the Bond, as VUSD employees are not allowed to take part in the Bond Oversight Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 3 – 1 to approve Resolution #23-02, Resolution of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District, Establishing the Measure E Oversight Committee and Adopting Committee Bylaws as presented.

Ayes: Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez. Absent: Ms. Amy Callahan. Abstain: None.

14.c Approval of Restructuring Fine Arts and Applied Arts Credits

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the restructuring of Fine Arts and Applied Arts Credits as presented.

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

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Amy Callahan. Abstain: None.

14.d Approval of a Supplemental Novel Recommended by the Supplemental Novel Adoption Committee (Full-Committee Review)

Item 14.d was amended to include the title and author from the previous December 13, 2022 board item: *Stamped* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the supplemental novel, recommended by the supplemental novel adoption committee, *Stamped* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi.

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

14.e Request for Consideration of Two New Courses; CTE Leadership/Internship Directed Studies and CTE CAP Organic Farm to Fork (First Reading)

Chief Innovation Officer Dr. Rene Rickard presented two new Career Technical Education (CTE) courses that staff would like to begin using in the fall of 2023. The first course, CTE Leadership/Internship Directed Studies, is for students who have already completed a two-year pathway and would like to continue in a leadership/internship compacity. The second course is the CTE Capstone Organic Farm to Fork course, is an interdisciplinary course, which will include the history of Agriculture in Ventura County back to the Chumash, crop management with the use of technology, business and marketing, and project management. Dr. Rickard shared that all VUSD high school students will have access to these courses.

There was Board consensus to bring this agenda item back for approval at our next regularly scheduled board meeting.

14.f Ratification of LEXIA Agreement for 2022-23 (First Reading)

Dr. Soledad Molinar, Executive Director of Educational Services, noted that the LEXIA contract is for 200 licenses for 18 months, to provide supplemental language development services for multilingual learners in the Ventura Unified School District. The effective date of the contract is from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the ratification of LEXIA Agreement for 2022-23 as presented.

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

14.g Revisions to Classified Exempt Hourly Salary Schedule

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the revisions to the classified exempt hourly salary schedule as presented.

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

14.h Ratification of Contract for Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the ratification of contract for Assistant Superintendent of Business Services as presented.

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

14.i Consideration of Resolution #23-03 Continuing Board of Trustees Authority to Hold Virtual Meetings Pursuant to AB 361

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-03, continuing Board of Trustees authority to hold virtual meetings as presented.

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

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Amy Callahan. Abstain: None.

14.j Board Representation of Board Appointed Committees

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the Board Appointed Committees with the following amendment: There was Board consensus to create a Bond subcommittee with Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez and Trustee Jerry Dannenberg representing the Board.

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

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Amy Callahan. Abstain: None.

CONFERENCE - SUPERINTENDENT

15.a Base Level Staffing

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro noted that the Board received a draft 2023-24 VUSD Base Level Staffing document and that copies were available for members of the public. Dr. Castro shared that Base Level Staffing is a General Fund contribution to these positions and is not inclusive of all of the different funds needed to fund staff at all of the sites. Dr. Castro noted that different iterations of this draft will be coming back to future regular board meetings for discussion. He noted there would be an upcoming Special Board Meeting where this base level staffing sheet will be used.

Dr. Castro referenced a letter received from County Superintendent Dr. Cesar Morales indicating that per the negotiations agreement, we need to engage in some permanent reductions. He noted that the significant declining enrollment VUSD is experiencing would necessitate these actions as well. Dr. Castro shared that the Executive Team has already met with the principals and received input as it pertains to their sites. Dr. Castro noted that the needs of each school are different and that the needs will drive changes to this draft.

The Board suggested adding "General Funds" to the draft Base Level Staffing document title and adding it to the website for transparency so the community can see that the document will be fluid.

15.b Surplus Property Update

Mr. David Soldani, Attorney with Atkinson and Andelson, and Ms. Dawn Dyer, President of the Dyer Sheehan Group in Ventura, presented information regarding two surplus properties: The Education Service Center (ESC) and the Avenue School. Mr. Soldani noted that the next step in the process is to notify certain public agencies of the declaration of surplus and the availability of these sites. The public agencies have 60 days to respond if they are interested in purchasing a property. Mr. Soldani does not advise that we follow this procedure on the ESC due to its size and place in the community and instead suggests using a request for qualifications followed by a request for proposals. This would allow VUSD to include District Priorities for the use of the ESC. This requires getting an excusal from the process by the state, by obtaining a Waiver from the Board of Education. Mrs. Dyer shared that it is important to decide on District Priorities before notifying the public agencies. Mr. Soldani suggested having a future board workshop on this item for additional information and to allow the public to comment.

There was Board consensus to agendize the Waiver at a future board meeting for Board consideration and to include a Public Hearing for community feedback.

CONFERENCE - BUSINESS SERVICES

16.a Ventura Unified Conference and Travel

Ms. Anna Campbell, Director of Fiscal Services, presented a proposed Travel Procedures and Regulations draft for Board consideration and feedback. Ms. Campbell reviewed reimbursement rates for daily meals and incidental expenses, mileage rates, and daily lodging allowances. Ms. Campbell also reviewed District travel restrictions effective January 1, 2017, by Assembly Bill No 1887, which prohibits state-funded and state-sponsored travel to states with discriminatory laws. Ms. Campbell noted that these travel guidelines would be for all VUSD staff.

The Board requested additional information regarding how much they spend annually for conferences/travel on average and how we compare to other districts. Dr. Castro suggested having this information for their upcoming Special Board Meeting regarding Governance on February 22, 2023.

16.b Bond Facilities Projects Updates

Ms. Terri Allison, Director of Facilities, gave an update on Bond Facilities Projects beginning with an overview of the 2020-2030 Long Range Facilities Master Plan which can be found on the VUSD website at <https://www.venturausd.org/about/measure-e>. Ms. Allison noted that the goals of the Master Plans include: Access and prioritize current and future facilities needs; identify associated costs to modernize, renovate and/or add facilities; and to transform current learning spaces to better meet the needs of future learners. Ms. Allison stated that project phasing considerations include current critical needs, DSA approvals, construction climate and labor availability; lead times for materials and equipment, and school calendar. Ms. Allison recommended the following projects for the upcoming 2023-24 school year: Fencing at various sites, high-priority playgrounds, high priority roofing.

Ms. Allison noted there would be a balance between district standards, project designs, and materials/finishes, and site-specific conditions and preferences. She shared there would be site-level construction committees which will include the principal, staff, school site council and parent teacher organizations. This committee will confirm school site project priorities and give feedback on school site designs. Ms. Allison noted there would be communication with the school community on projects, construction schedules and potential disruptions.

The Board noted that they would like extensive communication with our schools and neighborhoods regarding how the bond monies are spent. A suggestion was made to have time-lapse photos of the bond projects on the VUSD/school site websites. The Board would also like for inclusive playgrounds to be purchased for our sites.

CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

17.a Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending December 31, 2022.

Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, noted that there were no complaints filed with any school in the district for the quarter ending December 31, 2022.

CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

18.a Personnel Commission 2021-2022 Annual Report

Ms. Andrea Crouch, Director of Classified Human Resources, and Ms. Anne Campbell, Board Appointee to the Commission, presented on the approved 2021-22, Personnel Commission Annual Report. The full report can be found at <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1668813253/venturausdorg/sgqkxmclrsffs4xo2me3/PC2022AnnualReport.pdf>.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent item #22.a was pulled for a separate discussion and vote. Dr. Baarstad shared that this contract would be valid through the first series of bonds released, approximately four years. He noted that the cost of this contract would be paid through bond proceeds.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Item 22.a as presented.

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

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve consent items 19 - 21.b, and 22.b - 22.d as presented.

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

CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

- 19.a Administrative Recommendation to Waive Education Code Section 51241 (Permanent Exemption from Physical Education) and Administrative Recommendation to Waive Board Policy 6146.1(High School Graduation Requirement)
- 19.b Overnight, Out of the Tri-County and Ratification Field Trips

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated

- 20.a Ratification of Administration's Approval for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year
- 20.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year
- 20.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2022-23 School Year

CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified

- 21.a Classified Position Changes
- 21.b Classified Personnel Changes

CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES

- 22.a Legal Services Agreement By and Between Ventura Unified School District and Jones Hall
- 22.b Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts
- 22.c Ratification of Check Payments
- 22.d Donations to Ventura Unified School District and Schools

BOARD REPORTS

Trustee Forsythe thanked Dr. Castro for taking him on site visits to Sheridan Way, E.P. Foster, and Anacapa. He also thanked the principals and staff for educating him on their schools and DLI programs. Lastly, Mr. Forsythe attended the Chamber of Commerce breakfast on behalf of Board President Rodriguez.

Trustee Rodriguez shared that she participated in a Workforce Housing conversation this morning regarding next steps and was joined by Trustee Peterson and Superintendent Dr. Castro.

COMING EVENTS

- District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) – January 12 at 6:30 p.m.
- Martin Luther King Day: January 16, 2023 - District Closed
- Teacher of the Month Celebration: January 17 at 3:00 p.m. – Foothill HS
- African American Parent Committee (AAPC): January 18 at 6:00 p.m.

- Special Education District Advisory Committee (SEDAC): January 27 at 9:00 a.m.
- LCAP Advisory Committee: February 2 at 5:30 p.m.
- Parent Advisory Committee Meeting (PAC) – February 7 at 9:30 a.m.

FUTURE BOARD ITEMS

There was Board consensus to add the following future board agenda items:

1. Waiver/Surplus Property
2. Academic Interventions
3. Budget SMB
4. Dashboard Data Update
5. Bond Updates

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

Dr. Castro acknowledged School Board appreciation month and distributed a certificate to each Board Member.



CLOSED SESSION

There was no reason to return to closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 11:07 p.m., until the next regularly scheduled board meeting to take place on February 7, 2023.

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

APPROVED  President
 Secretary