



Ventura Unified  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
April 18, 2023  
APPROVED MINUTES

**Call to Order**

The Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at the ESC Board Room, where one or more members participated. The public had the opportunity to submit their public comment in person. Streaming of the meeting was available at <https://www.youtube.com/@VenturaUnifiedSchoolDistrict/streams>. Those in attendance were:

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

**Adoption of Agenda**

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the agenda as presented.

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

**Public Comment on Closed Session Items**

There was no public comments on closed session items.

**Motion to go to Closed Session**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:32 p.m.

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

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

At 7:02 p.m., Board Vice-President Dr. Jerry Dannenberg called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

**Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session**

There was no action taken in closed session.

**Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Castro introduced Ms. Gina Young, the new Principal at Mound Elementary School. Ms. Young took a moment to thank Dr. Castro and the Board, then introduced her family members.

Dr. Castro introduced Ms. Kathy Asher and Ms. Debbie Golden, Co-Presidents of the Ventura Education Partnership (VEP), and surprised them with being the 2022-23 Volunteers of the Year! Dr. Castro and the

Board shared commendations for their outstanding dedication and service to the Ventura Unified School District.

Dr. Castro recognized the VUSD Gratitude Award recipients for March. The Gratitude Awards were designed to recognize exceptional VUSD teachers, employees, volunteers, students, and administrators. There were 13 submissions that will receive a certificate of acknowledgment, and four individuals were randomly selected to also receive an Amazon gift card.

Mr. Greg Hanger, President of the California Industrial and Technology Education Association (CITEA), presented the 2023 CITEA Middle School Program of the Year Award to Mr. Paul Fredette, a Woodshop Teacher at Balboa Middle School.

Student Board Members Joshua Gelman (Sub) representing Foothill High School, Holden Behrendt representing El Camino High School, and Alex Castro representing VACE, gave brief updates on the exciting things happening at their school sites.

### **Correspondence**

Dr. Castro noted that we received correspondence from the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) regarding the Second Interim Report for the period ending January 31, 2023, certifying our positive certification. VCOE noted that a 14.5 million dollar deficit remains for the 2024-25 fiscal year and that it is imperative that the district develop an action plan with significant expenditure reduction to align with the loss of ongoing revenue due to declining enrollment.

### **Public Comments**

The following individuals gave a public comment:

1. Brian Brennan congratulated Cabrillo Middle School for winning the Middle School Band category and the Best in Parade category at the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Five members of the Cabrillo Middle School Jazz Band played a snippet of a piece of music before Mr. Brennan presented the two trophies to Cabrillo Middle School Music Teacher Mr. Mario Boccali.
2. Alicia LaVeré thanked the district for adding fencing around Loma Vista Elementary and creating a safe space for students.
3. Lindsay Zibach thanked the district for the fencing at Loma Vista and for providing a safe space for our students. She also shared the need to address school climate and to build skills in our students in the areas of conflict resolution, stress management, and empathy.
4. Jen Swartzentruber advocated for the district to get feedback regarding the fencing from a diverse group of individuals and to be mindful of the location and appearance of the fencing.
5. Sue Curtis is in favor of having after-hour access to Loma Vista.
6. Kate Stephens shared concerns regarding large class sizes in our middle schools and how mental health issues and at-risk students could go unnoticed.
7. Sean Mahoney noted his support of Measure E and looks forward to a community workforce agreement.
8. Anthony Ventura noted his support of Measure E and looks forward to putting local people to work. He is also in favor of the Bond Oversight Committee and shared that VUSD is doing a great job.
9. Bill Swaitek is in favor of after-hour access to our schools and would like this topic to be agendaized at a future meeting.
10. Lisa Warnock thanked the district for adding fencing to provide safety for our students. She also requested that we install reinforced windows for portions of the school that are not protected by the fencing, replace the older parameter fencing, and to keep the gates locked until all students have been picked up from school.
11. Deborah Meyer-Morris shared her concerns with the FCMAT contract on agenda item 14.d and with the LCAP survey results regarding bullying.
12. Cherie Egbert shared her concerns with bullying and advocated for the Sandy Hook Promise. She also shared concerns about the cost of the fencing and offered other ways that the money could be used.
13. Elizabeth Rexins advocated for student safety and would like the gates locked at all times at Loma Vista.
14. Jennifer Ewing noted her support of the gates being locked at Loma Vista at all times that students are present. She also read a public comment from Brad & Celeste who were in favor of the fencing at Loma Vista.
15. Joseph Corcoran thanked staff for getting the fencing up at Loma Vista so quickly and requested the older fencing be replaced. He also advocated for the gates to be locked when students are present.
16. Gina Galieo shared she would like the gates at Loma Vista to be unlocked at all times. She also noted how the design and placement of the fencing are very important.

17. Jose Arias shared his support of Measure E, looks forward to the community workforce agreement, and stated that VUSD is doing a great job.
18. Ashley Pope shared that she is against the FCMAT contract on agenda item 14.d as she feels like Special Education is being singled out.
19. Sherie Danzig thanked the district for the fencing at Loma Vista and in favor of locking the gates at all times when students are present.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **14.a Approval of Bond Oversight Committee Members (First Reading)**

Mr. Ahsan Mirza, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, shared that at the January 10, 2023, Board meeting, Resolution #23-02 to Establish the Measure E Citizen's Oversight Committee was approved. The amended bylaws were approved by the Board at the February 28, 2023 meeting. Per those bylaws, the Committee shall consist of at least 7, and up to 11 members appointed by the Board upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Board Bond Subcommittee. Candidates submitted written applications and will be selected based upon criteria established by Proposition 39: one member shall be a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in Ventura Unified School District, one member shall be the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in Ventura Unified School District and active in a parent-teacher organization, one member shall be active in a business organization representing the business community located in the District, one member shall be active in a senior citizens' organization, one member shall be active in a bona-fide taxpayers association, and two members shall be from the community-at-large. Additionally, an attempt was made to include at least one member from each Trustee District. Thirty-two applications were received by the deadline and reviewed by the Board Bond Subcommittee. The Board Bond Subcommittee suggested eleven Bond Oversight Committee Members and five alternate Bond Oversight Committee Members for Board consideration.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the following Bond Oversight Committee Members:

1. Andrew Morgan
2. Ashley Pope
3. Kim Prillhart
4. Dave Armstrong
5. Christina Alvarez
6. Madrigal Hendrych
7. Albert Antelman
8. Draza Mrvichin
9. Lara Reyes
10. Marina Porter
11. Ryan Grau

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

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Mr. Calvin Peterson and passed on a roll call vote of 3 – 0 to approve the following alternates for the Bond Oversight Committee:

1. Marco Guevas – Alternate
2. Rebekah Acker – Alternate
3. Rachel Dreher – Alternate
4. Brad Golden – Alternate
5. Jenna White - Alternate

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

### **14.b Consideration of Resolution #23-15, Appointment of Measure "E" Citizen's Oversight Committee Members and Alternates (First Reading)**

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-15, appointment of Measure "E" Citizen's Oversight Committee Members and Alternates as presented.

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

**14.c Measure E Bond Program and Facilities Improvement Consulting Services By and Between Ventura Unified School District and Balfour Beatty (First Reading)**

Mr. Ahsan Mirza, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, gave background information on the selection process and noted the cost would be approximately \$50,000.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the agreement with Balfour Beatty for Bond Program and Facilities Improvement Consulting as presented.

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

**14.d Consideration of the agreement for Consulting Services Between Financial Crisis & Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) and Ventura Unified School District (First Reading)**

Mr. Ahsan Mirza, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, read the scope of work from the FCMAT contract and noted the cost of \$42,600. Mr. Mirza noted that once the results were completed, they would be brought back to the Board for review and recommendations.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and Failed on a roll call vote of 2 – 2 to approve the agreement for consulting services between Financial Crisis & Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) and VUSD. There was Board consensus to bring this item back for a second read at the May 9 Board meeting and to see if a representative from FCMAT could be available for questions at that time.

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

**14.e Consideration of Supplemental Novels Recommended by the Supplemental Novel Adoption Committee (First Reading)**

Dr. Greg Bayless, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, listed the following novels recommended by the Supplemental Novel Adoption Committee:

1. *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Saenz
2. *Enrique's Journey (The Young Adult Adaptation): The true story of a Boy Determined to Reunite with His Mother* by Sonia Nazario
3. *Enrique's Journey: The true story of a Boy Determined to Reunite with His Mother* by Sonia Nazario
4. *Shilo* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
5. *The Serengeti Rules: The Quest to Discover How Life Works and Why it Matters* by Sean B. Carroll
6. *Into the Jungle: Great Adventures in the Search for Evolution* by Sean B. Carol
7. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* by Art Spiegelman

There was Board consensus to bring this item back for a second read at the May 9 Board Meeting.

**14.f Request for Consideration of a New Course: CTE Con First Responders, Public Safety & Emergency Response (First Reading)**

Dr. Rene Rickard, Chief Innovation Officer, distributed a course description to the Board Members. Additional copies were made available to the public.

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the new course CTE Con First Responders, Public Safety & Emergency Response as presented.

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

**14.g Request for Board Approval of Proposed Changes, Deletions or Additions to Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, and Exhibits related Educational Services, Human Resources, Business Services, and the Superintendent's Office. (First Reading)**

There was Board consensus to bring this item back for a second read at the May 9 Board meeting.

**14.h Superintendent Annual Evaluation - Ad Hoc Committee (First Reading)**

Trustees James Forsythe and Calvin Peterson volunteered to be on the Superintendent Annual Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Calvin Peterson, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Mr. James Forsythe and Mr. Calvin Peterson to serve on the Superintendent Annual Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee.

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

**CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**15.a African American Parent Council (AAPC) Advisory Report**

Dr. Soledad Molinar, Executive Director of Educational Services and Multilingual and Multicultural Education, introduced the African American Parent Council (AAPC) Members to present the AAPC advisory report to the Board. Dr. Molinar was joined by Bobbie Richards, Leisa Oden-Kurz, Robin Freeman, Joe Richards, and Anastasia Poland. The report included a review of the AAPC mission statement, a year in review including accomplishments and reflections in the 2022-2023 school year, and goals for the 2023-24 school year.

**15.b Summer School 2023**

Dr. Lorelle Dawes, Director of Expanded Learning, gave an update on the 2023 summer programs. Dr. Dawes reviewed a timeline from July 2022 through June 2023; noted the three summer school sessions, June 20-30, July 5 - 31, and August 1-11; and discussed the programs offered for Elementary, Middle, and High school students. Lastly, she reviewed the registration process and summer school enrollment numbers with over 3500 students currently enrolled.

- At 10:30 p.m., per Board Bylaw 9323, which states that Board Meetings shall be adjourned by 10:30 p.m., the Board took action to continue the meeting until no later than 11:00 p.m. It was moved by Calvin Peterson, seconded by Amy Callahan, and passed on a roll call vote of 4-0.

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

**15.c Consideration for Review of K-12 School Plans for Student Achievement (SPSA) for the 2022-23 School Year**

Dr. Greg Bayless, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, presented the K-12 School Plans for Student Achievement (SPSA) for the 2022-23 school year.

**CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

**16.a Report Regarding Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures Quarterly Report Pursuant to AR 1312.4 for Quarter Ending March 31, 2023.**

Ms. Gina Wolowicz, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, noted that no complaints were filed with any school in the district for the quarter ending March 31, 2023.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

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 17-20 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe  
Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez. 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 item 21.a as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. Calvin Peterson, Mr. James Forsythe  
Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez. 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 for Leave of Absence for Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year
- 18.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year
- 18.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Miscellaneous & Part-Time Certificated Assignments for the 2022-23 School Year
- 18.d Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2022-23 School Year

**CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Classified**

- 19.a Classified Personnel Changes
- 19.b Classified Position Changes
- 19.c Release of Probationary Classified Employee

**CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES**

- 20.a Permission to Establish Enterprise Fund (Fund 63)
- 20.b Consideration of Anacapa Middle School Mural
- 20.c Notice of Completion for C1-23 Mound Fire Reconstruction
- 20.d Notice of Completion for C3-23 #1 HVAC at Various Sites - Junipero Serra
- 20.e Ratification of Change Order #3, C3-23 HVAC at Various Sites (Junipero Serra)
- 20.f Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts
- 20.g Ratification of Check Payments
- 20.h Disposition of Obsolete and Surplus Items

**CONSENT - SUPERINTENDENT**

- 21.a Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes

**BOARD REPORTS**

None.

**COMING EVENTS**

- LCAP Advisory Committee Meeting – April 19 at 5:30 p.m.
- Teacher of the Month Celebration – Elmhurst, April 20 at 3:00 p.m.
- District English Learner Advisory Committee Meeting – April 20 at 6:30 p.m.
- Special Education District Advisory Committee Meeting – April 21 at 9:30 a.m.
- African American Parent Committee Meeting – April 26 at 6:00 p.m.
- Parent Advisory Committee Meeting – May 2 at 9:30 a.m.
- All VUSD Art Show – May 25 at 5 p.m.
- VUSD Retirement Celebration – May 30 at 3:30 p.m.

**FUTURE BOARD ITEMS**

- LCAP Public Hearing
- LCAP
- Budget
- Safety Protocols & Procedures

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

None.

**CLOSED SESSION**

There was no need to go back 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 10:45 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting on May 9, 2023.

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

APPROVED



President

Secretary