



**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
August 29, 2023  
ADOPTED MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

The Regular Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, August 8, 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 President	Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez
Board Vice President	Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Board Member	Ms. Amy Callahan
Board Member	Mr. James Forsythe
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 Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended the agenda with the following change: Item 16.a was pulled and will be brought back at a future meeting.

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

**Public Comment on Closed Session Items**

None.

**Motion to go to Closed Session**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to go to closed session at 5:02 p.m.

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

**REGULAR SESSION**

At 6:00 p.m., Board President Sabrena Rodriguez called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was held for Mr. Desmond Webster.

**Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session**

None.

**Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro thanked staff and students for a fantastic start to the school year.

**Correspondence**

**12.a VCOE Acknowledgment Letter and Provisional Appointment Forms**

Superintendent Dr. Antonio Castro noted that VUSD received an acknowledgment letter and provisional appointment forms from the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE).

### **Public Comments**

The following individuals gave a public comment on non-agendized items:

1. Marcia Thompson shared that she is part of "P.A.M," or Parents Advocating for Music, made up of parent representatives and music directors. She shared that the goal of P.A.M is to advocate for a districtwide vision for music.
2. Rebecca Fassett shared that the objective of P.A.M was to work with VUSD staff to create a K-12 framework. She stated she would also like to bring back the Arts Master Plan.
3. Drew LaFave noted that we are waiting on Proposition 28 funding, and Measure H is sunsetting. He shared concerns regarding programs that will need funding from the general fund and encouraged the district to adopt a vision for the arts.
4. Alana Sherren shared that she is working on a resolution to ensure that VUSD remains a safe place for all students to learn regarding of gender, race, sexual orientation, class, or disability.
5. Joshua Chancer shared concerns about the admission process for the gifted and talented program, which he stated is not aligned with Board Policy 6172. He shared that he feels the current program relies strictly on testing and is asking the Board to review the policy and ensure that additional methods are used in the admission process.
6. Stephen Schafer from the San Buenaventura Preservation Society noted that Washington School has been nominated to the national register and would like to work with VUSD on future uses of this building.

The following individuals gave a public comment on agendized items:

1. Dan Long (item # 14.a) thanked the Board for moving forward with doing something with the surplus properties and finding new uses for these buildings. He noted that he is in favor of Washington School being added to the National Registry of Historic Places.
2. Michael Hanson (item # 14.a) shared that he lives near Washington School and would like VUSD to reuse the building for something new instead of tearing it down. He shared that neighbors are concerned about a 3-story housing complex being built there.
3. Trisha Tortina (item # 14.a) shared that she would like Washington School to become a park or something equally good. She asked the Board to please listen to the community's input on this property and to not build a high-rise apartment complex.
4. Doug Tidwell (item # 14.a) shared that he is a neighbor of Washington School and would like the building to be preserved and used for something new.
5. Cathy Peterson (item # 14.a) shared that she is a neighbor of Washington School and would like to have the building preserved and used for something new and not turned into high-rise apartments.
6. Helen Eloyan (item # 14.a) noted she is in favor of the Waiver. She urged VUSD to please work with grassroots community requests when preparing for the RFP process.
7. Burt Handy (item # 14.a) shared concern about building housing at the Washington School site due to a lack of parking and narrow streets. He noted he is in favor of Washington School being added to the National Registry.

### **PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

#### **14.a Public Hearing: Intent to Request Waiver**

At 7:31 p.m., the Public Hearing regarding the Intent to Request a Waiver was opened. Seven individuals gave a public comment regarding the Waiver (see public comment section). The Public Hearing closed at 7:53 p.m.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **15.a Presentation Regarding Filling Board Member Vacancy and Consideration of Resolution #23-28, For Appointment of Provisional Board Member (First Reading)**

Mr. Anthony Ramos, Partner with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud, & Ramo (aalrr), presented an overview of filling a vacancy on a school board. Mr. Ramos noted that there are two options for the Board to choose from a provisional appointment or a special election to fill a vacancy, which must be done within 60 days from the date of the vacancy, or the filing of a deferred resignation. Mr. Ramos stated that an eligible candidate must be 18 years old, a registered voter, a resident of the school district, not an employee of the school district (or must resign before taking office), and not

otherwise disqualified from holding office. The provisional appointment must be made by majority vote.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-28, for the appointment of a provisional Board member to fill a vacancy for Trustee Area 3 on the Governing Board, as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.b Consideration of Resolution #23-29, Regarding The Timeline For Filling Board Member Vacancy (First Reading)**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve as Amended Resolution #23-29, establishing a procedure for the appointment of a provisional Board member for Trustee Area 3, with the following change: On Exhibit 3, the date should be October 26, 2023.

It was noted that Trustee Dannenberg and Trustee Forsythe would serve on the Board Vacancy Ad Hoc Committee.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.c Consideration of Resolution #23-26, Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) Supplementary Retirement Plan**

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-26, regarding Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) Supplementary Retirement Plan as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.d Consideration of the Agreement for Administrative Services Between Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) and Ventura Unified School District**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the agreement for administrative services between Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) and Ventura Unified School District as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.e Consideration of Resolution #23-27: Resolution of the Board of Education of the Ventura Unified School District Authorizing the Request for a Waiver of the Surplus Property Competitive Bidding Procedures Under Education Code Section 17466 Et Seq. (First Reading)**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Resolution #23-27, authorizing the request for Waiver of the surplus property competitive bidding procedures under Education Code Section 17466 Et Seq. as presented.

This item was held until after the Public Hearing, agenda item 14.a, was completed.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.f Request for Approval of Contracts Exceeding \$25,000 (First Reading)**

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 contracts exceeding \$25,000 as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.g Approval of Provisional Intern Permits (PIP) and Waivers (First Reading)**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the provisional Intern Permits (PIPS) and Waivers as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.h Announcement of Intended Appointee to the Personnel Commission and Notice of Public Hearing (First Reading)**

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve Ms. Anne Campbell as the intended appointee to the Personnel Commission and set the date for the Public Hearing for October 10, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**15.i Revisions to Classified Exempt Salary Schedule (First Reading)**

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve the revisions to the Classified Exempt Salary Schedule as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Mr. James Forsythe

Noes: None. Absent: Mr. Calvin Peterson. Abstain: None.

**CONFERENCE ITEMS**

1. Staff presentation
2. Board questions
3. Public comment
4. Board deliberation

**CONFERENCE - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**16.a ESGI Software Adoption**

This item was pulled and will be brought back to a future meeting.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Staff presentation
2. Board questions
3. Public comment
4. Board deliberation
5. Board action

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 3 – 0 to approve consent item #20.b as presented.

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

It was moved by Mr. James Forsythe, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve consent items # 17.a through 20.a, and consent item #20.c as presented.

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

### **CONSENT- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

- 17.a Request for Approval of Consolidated Application (ConApp) for Federal Title Programs
- 17.b Overnight, Out of the Tri-County Field Trips

### **CONSENT - HUMAN RESOURCES - Certificated**

- 18.a Ratification of Administration's Approval of Assignments Through Various Education Codes
- 18.b Ratification of Administration's Approval of Resignations, Retirements and Release for Certificated Personnel for the 2023-24 School Year
- 18.c Ratification of Administration's Approval of Employment and Reemployment of Certificated Personnel for the 2023-24 School Year

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

- 19.a Classified Position Changes

### **CONSENT - BUSINESS SERVICES**

- 20.a Ratification of Purchase Orders and Contracts
- 20.b Ratification of Purchase Orders, Contracts, and Checks - LIMITED
- 20.c Ratification of Check Payments

### **BOARD REPORTS**

Trustee Amy Callahan shared that she hopes to remain part of PAC as a representative to the community or her child's school. Ms. Callahan thanked staff for all the preparations behind the VUSD Celebrate event and noted that she loved the message of connectedness and presence.

Trustee Jerry Dannenberg thanked staff and students for a great start to the school year.

### **COMING EVENTS**

- Back-to-School Nights: Aug. 30th – Sept. 28th
- Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting: Sept. 1st, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Labor Day: Sept. 4th – District Closed
- Superintendent Listening Tours: Sept. 7th DATA, 14th Lemon Grove, and 29th Citrus Glen at 7:00 p.m.
- African American Parent Committee (AAPC) Meeting: Sept. 13th, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
- District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) Meeting: Sept. 21st, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
- Special Education District Advisory Committee (SEDAC) Meeting: Sept. 22nd, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

### **FUTURE BOARD ITEMS**

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

- Solar Energy - September 12
- Board Trustee Vacancy - SBM September 26
- Student data - October 10
- Arts Master Plan - TBD

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

Trustee James Forsythe thanked fellow teachers for the hard work they put into the start of the school year. He specifically thanked the staff at Loma Vista for welcoming his family as his daughter started kindergarten.

Trustee Sabrena Rodriguez thanked all staff members who worked throughout the summer and back again for the first week of school. Although she missed Celebrate this year, she shared she has heard such positive things around the sites. Lastly, she thanked Dr. Castro and congratulated him for the amazing job he has done over this past year.

Dr. Castro thanked VUSD staff for all they do.

The Board and Superintendent thanked Trustee Amy Callahan for her service to the Board of Education and gave commendations for her service to VUSD.

At 7:26 p.m., Board President Sabrena Rodriguez called for a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:31 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

There was no need to return to closed session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Ms. Amy Callahan, seconded by Mr. James Forsythe and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m., until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting to be held on September 12, 2023.

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

APPROVED

  
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President  
  
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Secretary