

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: October 9, 2024

Meeting Location: San Mateo County Office of Education
101 Twin Dolphin Dr.
Redwood City, California 94065

Board Members Present: Chelsea Bonini, Hector Camacho, Jr., Beverly Gerard, Ted Lempert, Hugo Torres

Board Members Absent: Susan Alvaro (due to illness), Jim Cannon

Staff Officials Present: Nancy Magee, Secretary; Jennifer Perna, Executive Assistant

Other Staff Present: Kevin Bultema, Marco Chávez, Patricia Love, Tami Moore, Sarah Notch

Youth Commission Liaison Present: Bethany Zhao

1. OPENING ITEMS

A. Call to Order

Board President Chelsea Bonini called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Approval of Agenda

Superintendent Magee requested the agenda be amended to correct the title of item 5A from “Discuss/Act on the Proposition 28 Funding Plan for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools” to “Discuss/Act on the Proposition 28 Funding Report for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools.”

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Lempert, the October 9, 2024, agenda as amended was approved by a vote of five in favor (Bonini, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Torres) with two members absent (Alvaro and Cannon).

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speaker provided live public comment:

PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

- Christian Morales, SMCOE employee and California School Employees Association (CSEA) 887 Vice President

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 18, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Lempert, the Minutes of the September 18, 2024, Regular Board Meeting were approved by a vote of five in favor (Bonini, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Torres) with two members absent (Alvaro and Cannon).

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- B. Receive Quarterly Report on Complaints, as Required by the Williams Settlement
- C. Adopt Resolution No. 24-48 Establishing the Actual 2023-2024 and the Estimated 2024-2025 Appropriations Limitation (Gann Limit)
- D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 24-49 Recognizing October 13-19, 2024, as Week of the School Administrator
- E. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 24-50 Recognizing October 2024 as Filipino American History Month
- F. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 24-51 Honoring Joy Testa on Her Retirement
- G. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 24-52 Honoring Rosa Aviles on Her Retirement
- H. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 24-53 Honoring Edwin Yance on His Retirement

After a motion by Board Member Lempert and a second by Board Member Gerard, the Consent Agenda was approved by a vote of five in favor (Bonini, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Torres) with two members absent (Alvaro and Cannon).

5. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

- A. Discuss/Act on the Proposition 28 Funding Report for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools

Marco Chávez, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division, presented the Proposition 28 Funding Report for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools.

Board President Bonini asked whether the funding would remain the same for next year or would fluctuate. Deputy Superintendent Chávez said the amount will fluctuate slightly because it is based on a formula that allocates 1 percent of SMCOE's Prop 98 funds received, excluding the arts and music allocation.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION (continued)

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Lempert, the Proposition 28 Funding Report for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools was approved by a vote of five in favor (Bonini, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Torres) with two members absent (Alvaro and Cannon).

6. BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

A. Discuss/Act on the 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals Year-End Closing Report

Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, and Minette Manio, Executive Director, Internal Business Services, Business Services Division, presented the 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals Year-End Closing Report.

Board President Bonini asked about the total amount being sent back to the state from the past year. Deputy Superintendent Bultema confirmed it was \$35,158,097.

Board President Bonini asked how much are in total reserves, including Fund 17 and other reserve funds. Deputy Superintendent Bultema indicated the following amounts:

- Fund 12 (Child Development): \$2.8 million
- Fund 14 (Deferred Maintenance): \$8.6 million
- Fund 17 (Savings Account): almost \$83 million
- Fund 19 (Foundation Special Reserve): \$217,000
- Fund 20 (Special Reserve for Post-Employment Benefits): almost \$15 million
- County School Facilities Fund: \$1.3 million
- Fund 40 (Capital Improvement Projects): \$51.6 million

Deputy Superintendent Bultema emphasized the total reserves are substantial, and the County Office plans to use reserves wisely to manage future deficits.

After a motion by Board Member Torres and a second by Board Member Gerard, the 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals Year-End Closing Report was approved by a vote of five in favor (Bonini, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Torres) with two members absent (Alvaro and Cannon).

7. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Receive Report on Assembly Bill (AB) 3216, The Phone-Free Schools Act

Superintendent Magee provided a report on Assembly Bill (AB) 3216, the Phone-Free Schools Act.

Youth Commission Liaison Zhao asked if the goal is to eliminate cell phone use entirely, reduce it, or whether that would be determined in the future. Superintendent Magee responded that the goal

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

was not to eliminate cell phone use entirely. Schools with phone-free policies prioritize restricting phone use during instructional time, with some allowance for use during breaks and lunch.

Board Member Torres commented that at his school, students place their phones in bins at the beginning of the day and retrieve them at dismissal. He advised that Apple Watches remain a challenge because they are still connected and can cause distractions. It is difficult to take all factors into account.

Board Member Camacho shared he attended an event which included a panel focused on artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education. The panel discussed how AI won't replace workers, but workers who know how to use AI will replace those who don't. Board Member Camacho emphasized the importance of balancing the benefits of technology with health and safety concerns. Superintendent Magee highlighted the need for better education on digital literacy and media use, starting at a younger age, to help students understand technology and engage positively. She also stressed the importance of teaching social media etiquette and how to recognize signs of distress in peers.

Board Member Lempert advocated for educational policies that make sense rather than being driven by headlines. He highlighted the irony of addressing a mental health crisis by focusing on school restrictions when the real issue is managing technology use outside of school. He also called for more active advocacy to ensure legislators support policies that truly benefit schools.

Board Member Gerard acknowledged the complexity of managing phone use, noting it is common to see people using their phones in social gatherings. She underscored that phones are a distraction in class and often students aren't using them for educational purposes. She also stressed the need for education on proper phone use and suggested that explaining the reasons behind the rules can lead to better compliance.

Board President Bonini discussed how students are being educated earlier about digital literacy through programs like Common Sense Media. She teaches a unit on this topic to her second graders and it is discussed in all classes at her school. Her son's school does not allow phones, especially during breaks, to encourage social interaction.

Board President Bonini referred to creating board policies for our schools and asked for data regarding how much phones are a distraction versus a tool. She asked whether the current phone policy is voluntary, if there are other issues with students engaging with their phones, and what the specific distractions are. She stated she doesn't believe our students should be using phones, but she also respects the complexity of the situation.

Board Member Torres agreed that cell phones can be powerful tools when used correctly but emphasized the need to consider equity. Not all students have cell phones, and those who do may not have the same technological capabilities. This disparity should be taken into account when developing policies.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

B. Public Disclosure of the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools and the San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) for 2024-2027

Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division presented the public disclosure of the collective bargaining agreement between the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools and the San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) for 2024-2027.

There were no questions from the Board.

C. Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Magee began by expressing her professional frustration and deep disappointment with the Santa Clara County Board of Education for firing Santa Clara County Superintendent Dr. Mary Ann Dewan without cause. She explained their action is an example of board politics gone wrong, creating a toxic environment that distracts from serving students' best interests. She described her six-year working relationship with Dr. Dewan, praising her as a tireless public servant focused on building and supporting equitable systems for students. Superintendent Magee criticized the timing of the board's decision only weeks before the November election and potential board turnover, calling it egregious and irresponsible. She emphasized that such adult-focused drama depletes staff, impacts morale, and seriously diverts attention from student needs, and students deserve better.

Superintendent Magee described the past month as a period of significant progress in several long-term projects. She highlighted the launch of the new Big Lift Strategic Plan on September 25, which includes a broader, more formalized, and transparent governance structure and a vision for structured literacy from preschool through third grade. Going forward the Big Lift will directly impact TK – 3rd grade classrooms. Superintendent Magee participated in a two-day Big Lift retreat with the eight Big Lift districts and their superintendents to support literacy leadership and system transformation.

Superintendent Magee reported the United for Youth: Vision 2030 report was introduced at the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Annual Leadership Breakfast the previous Monday. This blueprint aims to enhance behavioral health support for all youth in San Mateo County. The planning took a year and involved more than 100 community leaders and stakeholders, including Board President Bonini. The blueprint will guide strategic actions for youth behavioral health and seeks additional funding, starting with \$500,000 per year from Measure K dollars for the next three years. Superintendent Magee expressed her pride in this achievement but acknowledged the real work lies ahead in implementing the plan and improving conditions for every child.

Superintendent Magee discussed the completion of the year-long classification and compensation study at the County Office, which will be presented to the Personnel Commission for final approval on October 16. This study updated job classifications, descriptions, and market standards for all classified employees, which needed a refresh after nearly 20 years. She expressed her gratitude and respect for Randy Perez, Executive Director, Personnel Commission Services, who capably and steadily led the process. This study brings organizational changes, which can be challenging, but aims to ensure staff are working with market-standard duties and associated compensation. An equity-driven

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

implementation plan will be developed, focusing first on staff working closest with students and those farthest from the compensation median. The goal is to inspire positive changes to better serve students, teachers, and districts.

Superintendent Magee noted next week is the Week of the School Administrator and discussed the resolution which had been passed. She shared her deep appreciation for the school administrators who work tirelessly to create positive learning and teaching conditions. These efforts support students and staff, and help students find their confidence and voice and develop skills to navigate the complexities of the 21st century.

Superintendent Magee congratulated Deputy Superintendent Bultema and his family on his daughter's graduation.

Superintendent Magee said the Board would adjourn the meeting in honor of Gary Evan Moore, father of Tami Moore, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources, who suddenly passed away in September. She expressed her love and support for Associate Superintendent Moore and wished her and her family comfort and healing in the coming year.

Superintendent Magee reminded the Board there is an upcoming school site visit to Gateway, the Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families, and Hillcrest scheduled for Thursday, October 24. She will attend and is looking forward to the experience.

8. BOARD MEMBERS

A. Receive Reports from the Board Ad Hoc Subcommittees and Representatives

Board President Bonini reported the Board Policy Subcommittee met to review policies that will soon be presented to the Board for first and second readings. She noted some board regulations typically found in the form of handbooks, such as for interdistrict attendance appeals and charter appeals, were not captured in the June 2023 policy review. The Board Policy Subcommittee will take on the review of charter school policies, and she requested that other Subcommittees review the related handbooks and regulations to ensure all necessary regulations are updated.

B. Board Member Comments

Board Member Lempert

Board Member Lempert discussed the shock of Superintendent Dewan's firing, expressed concern about the current crisis in school board governance, and noted that high-performing districts often have long-serving superintendents. He criticized the trend of school boards micromanaging. Board Member Lempert emphasized the need for school boards to focus on addressing equity gaps for students and providing accountability, especially at the county level. He warned against the negative impact of politics on school boards, described how what is happening to students is shameful and horrifying, and urged board members to prioritize the best interests of students.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Camacho

Board Member Camacho shared he attended the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Annual Leadership Breakfast for the first time. He praised the event and shared his surprise that the survivors of Sandy Hook graduated high school this past May. Board Member Camacho emphasized the importance of this ongoing work, commended the leadership of Superintendent Magee, and discussed excitement for the launch of the United for Youth initiative.

Board Member Camacho reported he also attended the Black Educators Welcome event, organized by the County Office and the Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council. He expressed his appreciation for the celebration of educators in an affinity space and thanked the County Office for hosting the event.

Board Member Camacho discussed his recent appointment to the Ravenswood Education Foundation Board. He is excited to contribute to positive developments in the Ravenswood School District under Superintendent Gina Sudaria's leadership.

Board Member Gerard

Board Member Gerard apologized for missing the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Breakfast due to illness but expressed appreciation for the work being done in San Mateo County.

Board Member Gerard extended condolences to Associate Superintendent Moore and her family for their loss.

Board Member Gerard reported that the transition group finalized their requests to the County School Boards Association (CSBA) Board of Directors. The requests will be voted on at the upcoming Delegate Assembly meeting during the Board of Directors meeting. Following that meeting, there will be a Region 14 meeting where they will be notified about what was approved. Additional announcements will be made at the Delegate Assembly the following day.

Board Member Gerard was also excited to announce the formation of the Association for California County Boards of Education (ACCBE), where she will serve on the Board of Directors. They are hosting a webinar on October 28 designed to introduce the association's purpose and activities. Board Member Gerard expressed excitement about this development and the hard work involved.

Board Member Gerard shared that the County Office received high praise and compliments on their presentation at the County Board Member Services Conference. She acknowledged the team's efforts and well-deserved recognition.

Board Member Torres

Board Member Torres congratulated Board Member Camacho on joining the Ravenswood Education Foundation Board, noting they are lucky to have him.

Board Member Torres shared he signed up for the ACCBE webinar.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Gerard brought attention to the scheduling conflict between the ACCBE webinar and the San Mateo County School Boards Association dinner on October 28.

Youth Commission Liaison Zhao

Youth Commission Liaison Zhao announced the Youth Commission formed their subcommittees for the year. She will be part of the Community Equity Subcommittee which plans to focus on advocacy around domestic violence and provide resources and shed light on this stigmatized issue.

Youth Commission Liaison Zhao discussed she recently presented to the County Commission on the Status of Women, specifically about discrimination and inequities within the national Boys State and Girls State. She also chose this topic for her senior exhibition and has found the experience of learning about different perspectives and interests rewarding. She is excited about what the year will bring.

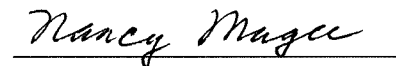
Board President Bonini

Board President Bonini had no comments.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. in honor of Gary Evan Moore, Associate Superintendent Moore's father. Mr. Moore was a passionate musician, creative professional, and loving father who enjoyed traveling, attending Renaissance fairs, and playing music. The Board expressed their condolences to Associate Superintendent Moore and her family, acknowledging the joy and magic Mr. Moore brought to those who knew him.

Board President Bonini announced the next regular meeting would take place on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.



Nancy Magee, Secretary

jlp