

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: April 2, 2025

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

Board Members Present: Susan Alvaro, Edith Arias, Chelsea Bonini, Beverly Gerard, Patricia Love, Mike O'Neill, Hugo Torres

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

Other Staff Present: Ian Bain, Kevin Bultema, Marco Chávez,
Tami Moore, Marchelle Moten, Sarah Notch, Kris Shouse, Mary Yung

1. OPENING ITEMS

A. Call to Order

Board President Hugo Torres called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

B. Approval of Agenda

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the April 2, 2025, agenda as presented was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speaker provided live public comment:

- Janice Pellizzari, San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) teacher and San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) President

3. **CEREMONIAL SWEARING IN OF NEW SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER EDITH ARIAS**

- A. Ceremonial Swearing in of New San Mateo County Board of Education Member Edith Arias

Board President Torres administered the Oath of Office to new San Mateo County Board of Education member Edith Arias.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. March 19, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Board Member O'Neill and a second by Board Member Gerard, the Minutes of the March 19, 2025, Regular Board Meeting were approved by a vote of six in favor (Alvaro, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) and one abstention (Arias).

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- B. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 25-20 Recognizing April 10, 2025, as Dolores Huerta Day
C. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 25-21 Recognizing April 22, 2025, as Earth Day
D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 25-22 Recognizing April 23, 2025, as Administrative Professionals Day

After a motion by Board Member O'Neill and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the Consent Agenda was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

6. **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION**

- A. Receive Report on the Impact of Recent Federal Policies on School Districts in the County

Marco Chávez, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division, provided a report on the impact on recent federal policies on school districts in the county.

Board Member Love discussed how Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds were frozen last week, affecting some states significantly, although California might not be heavily impacted. She asked if this situation is affecting the County Office. Deputy Superintendent Chávez indicated he had not heard about ESSER funds, but he could look into the matter and provide more information.

Board Member Love expressed concern about the significant impact of a \$6 billion Medicaid shortfall in California on children and families, which is heartbreaking. She noted the Department of Education is not investigating California's health programs, and questioned who is left to handle such responsibilities.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION (continued)

Board Member Love asked if the tobacco tax revenue was down because fewer people are smoking. Deputy Superintendent Chávez said yes, which is positive for public health but results in lower tax revenue.

Board Member Alvaro shared memories from the late 80s and early 90s when immigration raids led to family separations in her agricultural community. She emphasized the lasting impact on children separated from their families and the need for mental health support for affected children, their friends, and their teachers. Board Member Alvaro highlighted the importance of providing mental health scaffolding now more than ever.

Board Member Alvaro requested improved messaging to address rumors that circulate in the community. She shared an example of panic caused by false sightings of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) vehicles and discussed misunderstandings about the Department of Education being dismantled. Board Member Alvaro emphasized the need for clear communication to reassure the public about the continuity of schools and programs. Deputy Superintendent Chávez highlighted the team's efforts in organizing community events to deliver important messages and strategies to families, such as rapid response numbers in case of sightings or reports of agents. He also underscored the message from Board President Torres and Superintendent Magee was well-received and positively impacted the community.

Board Member Arias asked whether all San Mateo County school districts have protocols to support students. Deputy Superintendent Chávez recalled that a board policy recommended by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California School Boards Association (CSBA) was adopted by many districts, however some communities did not need such protocols due to their demographics.

Board President Torres discussed school districts providing mental health services for students, given the heightened stress, anxiety, and fear. He asked whether any districts have reached capacity and need more support. Deputy Superintendent Chávez replied he hadn't heard of any districts reaching capacity but will investigate it. The Safe and Supportive Schools team is actively supporting both students and staff, recognizing the need to help staff process anxieties stemming from their families' experiences.

Board President Torres requested an update after April 28, acknowledging it will take time and research.

B. Receive Update on School Programs at the Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families and Special Services

Heather Logan, M.Ed., BCBA, Principal, Early Childhood Education and Related Services, Educational Services Division, and Ellen Paulino, M.A., Principal, Special Services, Educational Services Division provided an update on school programs at the Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families and Special Services.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION (continued)

Board Member Alvaro expressed heartfelt gratitude for the presentation. She praised the wonderful work being done and noted the positive climate felt during her brief visit. She asked about the many staff who were in attendance showing their support. Principal Logan and Principal Paulino pointed out the various staff members present, both in person and remotely.

Board Member Gerard reminisced about visiting the facility when it had no students or teachers and expressed joy at seeing its growth and development. She praised the wonderful programs and the hard work of everyone involved, highlighting the excitement and engagement of the children. Board Member Gerard conveyed her appreciation for the transformation to a thriving facility.

Board Member Arias praised the creation of a universal design for learning and the program's perfect score of 30 out of 30. She highlighted the importance of modeling successful programs for other districts, creating a ripple effect that benefits more families and students. As a special education teacher, she was also delighted to see support for principals.

Board Member Bonini shared she was impressed by the growth and dedication observed during their visit. She appreciated seeing the preschool classrooms and the beautiful, yet-to-be-occupied classrooms. Board Member Bonini highlighted the commitment to the curriculum and the impressive new spaces, including the multimedia space and micro-business areas. She encouraged the new board members to visit these spaces.

Board Member Love echoed all of the previous compliments. She asked Principal Paulino if the program has reached a stable point with enrollment, and if the projections for the program's future were for expansion or contraction. Principal Paulino informed there are about 40 students enrolled, with 11 new referrals under review. Some students are exiting as they age out of the program. The program appears to be growing, indicating a continued need for the services provided, and updates will be provided as the school year progresses.

Board President Torres commended Principal Logan, Principal Paulino, and their teams for their dedication and presence. He appreciated the joy visible in the pictures and presentations, highlighted the impactful leadership, and emphasized the current success wouldn't be possible without their efforts.

Board President Torres asked Principal Logan about enrollment goals for families who can afford the program but aren't eligible financially. Principal Logan explained the program is driven by a master contract, currently allowing for eight students, with hopes to expand to twelve next year. She emphasized the need for methodical growth, considering staff-to-student ratios and licensing guidelines, and expressed excitement about the program's future.

7. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Superintendent's Comments

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

Superintendent Magee warmly welcomed Board Member Arias to her first county board meeting and shared she looks forward to getting to know her better and learning from her lived and professional experiences.

Superintendent Magee acknowledged the serious and concerning federal policy changes, including the reduction in force at the Department of Education. She underscored the immediate impact on Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications for financial aid and student loan funding. Despite the federal government's lack of funding for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work, she emphasized its importance in effective education, noting that students who feel unsafe or excluded cannot maximize their learning potential. Superintendent Magee shared that local state and federal leaders, including Congressman Kevin Mullen, Senator Josh Becker, and Assemblymember Diane Papan, are hosting a gathering at the County Center on Saturday, April 5, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to stand up for public education. She urged the public to attend and support the foundational role of public education in democracy.

Superintendent Magee announced the County Office's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, led by Greg Fry, Coordinator, School Climate, Educational Services Division, earned the role as the regional lead for Region 4, which includes several local counties. The team impressed the rating committee with their genuine and organic responses during the interview. Superintendent Magee congratulated the leadership team and emphasized the importance of this work in fostering a sense of belonging and success for students.

Superintendent Magee discussed the positive feedback received from the recent Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) midterm review for the Court and Community Schools program. The review praised the County Office's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) initiatives for leading to measurable gains in academics, engagement, and well-being. It also highlighted the impressive use of data, especially given the challenges of tracking students with interrupted learning histories. The WASC committee requested permission to share SMCOE staff Board reports with other counties as a model for monitoring student success. Superintendent Magee emphasized the collective effort of various teams within the County Office, attributing our success to persistent, passionate work centered on students. She acknowledged the challenges faced, especially since COVID-19, and celebrated the intentional efforts leading to positive results in 2025. She congratulated the teams and expressed pride in all of their accomplishments.

Superintendent Magee described a recent experience where community members and students asked for public support from the County Board of Education on a particular issue. She recommended establishing a process for handling such requests. After discussion with Board President Torres and Board Member Gerard, this suggested protocol will be added to the Board agenda on April 16 to ensure timely and efficient handling of such requests.

8. BOARD MEMBERS

A. Discuss Draft 2025-2026 Board Meeting Calendar

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Alvaro asked why several of the meeting dates had shifted from the first and third Wednesdays to the second and fourth Wednesdays. Superintendent Magee explained some meeting dates were adjusted to avoid major Jewish holidays. Additionally, the June dates were changed to allow the business team more time to prepare the budget.

Board Member O'Neill asked if the Governor still releases a May revised budget, and if it would be better to have the Study Session after the May revision instead of in April. Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, explained the May revision has not had a substantial impact on SMCOE's budget in recent years. Discussing priorities and processes earlier, especially with the implementation of the new ERP financial system, is beneficial.

Board President Torres suggested scheduling the retreat shortly after the social dinner in July or August, but before the school year starts. He said it would be valuable for the team to convene at that time and discuss their goals. He also proposed having the Governance Workshop in November. Superintendent Magee asked if Board President Torres wanted a Retreat between the social dinner in July and the board meeting on August 20. He confirmed that was correct.

Superintendent Magee acknowledged the difficulty in finding suitable dates for everyone but suggested presenting a range of possibilities via a Doodle poll. She proposed options for the retreat – either a four to five-hour session on a Saturday morning or a late afternoon into evening session on a weekday, including dinner. She expressed hope a date could be found that all board members could attend.

Board Member Alvaro asked if the summer retreat would preclude a retreat on November 5. Board President Torres clarified he was suggesting having the Governance Workshop in November and the retreat in the summer.

Board Member Bonini asked for clarification about the social dinner. Board President Torres explained the idea came from a recent dinner in Anaheim, which was an excellent opportunity for everyone to get together. With new board members, it is important to have a setting outside the regular board meeting to spend time with each other. Superintendent Magee added that while dinners at conferences will continue, not all members are always able to attend. A local social dinner in San Mateo County ensures all seven board members can attend and helps to build the team.

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

Board Member Bonini reported the Gateway Subcommittee met on March 31 and received updates about programming at Gateway and Hillcrest. The Subcommittee requests the report be sent directly to the Board instead of being recapped. Additionally, they received an update on the design work at Gateway and requested the Board be more included in that process. Board Member Gerard emphasized the importance of sharing this information with the Board, because it is crucial for the Board to understand the plan and current activities at the Court and Community Schools level.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Love reported the Board/Superintendent Advocacy Subcommittee met the previous day and discussed three pieces of legislation to be considered at the next meeting: Assembly Bill (AB) 1224, extending substitute teacher periods; AB 959, administrator internship programs run by county offices of education; and AB 927, increasing the time allowed for William's review. These bills have been endorsed by the California County Superintendents and the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE).

Board Member Love additionally shared the school task force is organizing meetings to discuss school funding adequacy, with the first virtual meeting on April 21, the second on May 19 at the County Office's San Bruno campus, and the third at 101 Twin Dolphin Dr. Their plans include going to district boards, especially those in the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) category, to inform them about the ongoing work and seek their support.

Board President Torres noted he served on the Gateway and Advocacy Subcommittees and expressed gratitude to the chairs for their leadership and organization. He also thanked the County Office staff members in attendance for their assistance in the discussions.

C. Board Member Comments

Board Member Alvaro

Board Member Alvaro welcomed Board Member Arias.

Board Member Alvaro thanked the Court and Community Schools staff for the thank-you card.

Board Member Alvaro shared she will not be joining the elected leaders on Saturday because she will be attending the first nonprofit day on the coast to support local nonprofits.

Board Member Alvaro gave a shout-out to the Half Moon Bay High School robotics team, the Pumpkin Bots, for their impressive performance at the Silicon Valley Regional competition, where they placed sixth and received the Rising All-Star Award.

Board Member Alvaro shared an inspiring quote by Albert Camus highlighting the resilience and inner strength that keeps her going.

Board Member Arias

Board Member Arias expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and support from everyone, including Superintendent Magee and staff in the Superintendent's Office. She appreciates the teamwork and support from the County Office and is excited to be part of it.

Board Member Arias explained she was absent from the March 19 board meeting because she was in Sacramento completing the Master Plan for Developmental Services. This plan resulted in a 195-page document with 167 recommendations from five work groups, addressing the needs of students with extensive special education requirements. She felt honored to be part of the stakeholder committee.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Bonini

Board Member Bonini reported on the San Mateo County School Boards Association's (SMCSBA's) Legislative Brunch on March 22 and thanked the County Office staff for their support. She noted the attendance of County Office administrators and trustees, along with Congressman Sam Liccardo, Senator Josh Becker, Assemblymember Marc Berman, and Assemblymember Diane Papan.

Board Member Bonini reminded colleagues about the upcoming Kent Awards on Friday, May 2. She shared that Board Member Gerard is part of the review committee and the process is ongoing.

Board Member Bonini welcomed Board Member Arias.

Board Member Love

Board Member Love welcomed Board Member Arias and said it was an honor to serve together.

Board Member Love congratulated Board Member Bonini for organizing an excellent and effective SMCSBA event, and acknowledged the hard work behind the scenes.

Board Member Love thanked Deputy Superintendent Chávez for the evening's well-researched report and responsiveness.

Board Member Love highlighted Earth Month and said she attended the 10-year celebration for the Environmental Solutionary Teacher Fellowship, which has impacted 25,000 students and hundreds of teachers in the county. She discussed the "Seeds to Solutions" environmental curriculum for grades K-12, created in partnership with Ten Strands and funded by a \$6 million legislative grant. She praised Superintendent Magee's leadership in this significant project.

Board Member O'Neill

Board Member O'Neill welcomed Board Member Arias.

Board Member O'Neill shared his experience attending the Oceana Senior Exhibition Day for the first time, noting the interesting and controversial topics presented by the seniors.

Board Member O'Neill said he attended Farm Day in Half Moon Bay, enjoying the agricultural displays and interactions with farmers.

Board Member O'Neill expressed concerns about potential significant budget cuts for the county due to federal Medicaid cuts and possible reductions in vehicle license fees, which could total around \$700 million and an additional \$130 to \$150 million, respectively.

Board Member Gerard

Board Member Gerard discussed her participation at Oceana Senior Exhibition Day, where she observed two interesting presentations on child actor protection and mandatory housing. She enjoyed the experience and plans to participate again next year.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Gerard said she attended the SMCSBA Legislative Brunch and praised Board Member Bonini for her efforts in organizing the event.

Board Member Gerard reported on the upcoming ACCBE new board member training on April 7, focusing on being an ambassador and advocate for county offices and boards. Another presentation on board procedures and protocols is scheduled for April 24, and she encouraged all board members to attend.

Board Member Gerard expressed appreciation for the evening's presentations.

Board President Torres

Board President Torres apologized for missing both the SMCSBA Legislative Brunch and the Orgullo y Educación (OYE) Conference due to illness.

Board President Torres reported he was at the State Capitol on Wednesday to advocate with Equality California for the LGBTQIA+ community. He specifically thanked Assemblymember Marc Berman for discussing AB 908, which is the LGBTQIA+ Inclusion and Fair Treatment Act in Schools. He emphasized the importance of ensuring all students feel safe and secure at school.

Board President Torres thanked the County Office teams for their incredible work and expressed pride in working alongside them and his fellow board members.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m. Board President Torres announced the next regular meeting would take place on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.



Nancy Magee, Secretary

jlp