

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of the Board of Trustees' Meeting of August 12, 2021
Special Meeting, Wednesday, August 4

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) NOTICE

This meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order N-35-20 issued on March 21, 2020 allowing for deviation of teleconference rules required by the Brown Act and pursuant to the order of the Health Officer of San Mateo County dated March 16, 2020 as this meeting is necessary so that the South San Francisco Unified School District can conduct necessary business and is permitted under the order as an essential governmental function.

As SSFUSD is an inclusive school district a Spanish language translation of the Board meeting was also available to the Spanish speaking community.

This meeting included closed captions which required the Board to provide a break, for the stenographer's benefit, after approximately every 1.5 hours.

OPEN SESSION - 6:30 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER

CLOSED SESSION - 6:30 p.m.

1. To consider the appointment of one (1) public employee to the position of Principal of Sunshine Gardens ES, in accordance with Government Code Section 54956.
2. To consider the appointment of one (1) public employee to the position of Principal of Alta Loma MS, in accordance with Government Code Section 54956.
3. To consider the appointment of one (1) public employee to the position of Director of Facilities, in accordance with Government Code Section 54956.

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION - 7:00 p.m.

In President Daina Lujan's absence, Vice President Mina Richardson opened the meeting.

B. ROLL CALL

Board Members:	Mr. John Baker - Present
	Dr. Chialin Hsieh - Present
	Ms. Daina Lujan - Absent
	Mrs. Patricia Murray - Present
	Mrs. Mina Richardson - Present

Cabinet Members: Dr. Shawnterra Moore, Superintendent - Present
Mr. Keith Irish, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services and Categorical Programs - Present
Mr. Ted O, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services - Present
Dr. Jay Spaulding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and Student Services - Present

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

D. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

We acknowledge that the South San Francisco Unified School District is located on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.

We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the Ancestors, Elders, and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

E. REPORTING OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION

MOTION #217 (Baker/Hsieh) to approve the appointment of Leticia Gonzalez to the position of Sunshine Gardens ES Principal. Motion Carried (Unanimous)

MOTION #218 (Hsieh/Murray) to approve the appointment of Nina Mendez to the position of Alta Loma MS Principal. Motion Carried (Unanimous)

At this point, Vice President Richardson turned the meeting over to Trustee John Baker, as she was having technical difficulties.

The Board recessed at 7:04 p.m. for a break to resolve Vice President Richardson's technical difficulties and reconvened at 7:07 p.m.

Vice President Richardson requested moving Action Items 2 and 3 up in the agenda before Item 1.

Trustee Patricia Murray recommended rescheduling Item #1, the SSFUSD and SSF PD MOU, to a meeting when President Lujan can be present since her voice is important.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

Public comments were submitted in advance of the meeting, were read by all Board members and posted on the District's website before the meeting.

The following live comments were made at three separate times during the meeting:

Marcela Rivera said at the last City Council meeting, Councilmember Eddie Flores brought up opening the Sunshine Gardens ES Park. She agrees with the idea because there are not any parks in that neighborhood. In a recent Parks Commission meeting, it was said that the area has a dense concentration of kids. However, the closest parks are at either Alta Loma MS or Orange Park. She suggested opening the Sunshine Gardens ES playground and potentially, the ECHS track, and said the Board should work with the City to figure out the legality if that is why the Sunshine Gardens ES is closed.

ACTION

2. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

a. Approval of Edgenuity Independent Study License Agreement

Assistant Superintendent Keith Irish told the Board that, in conjunction with AB130, authorized school districts in California need to approve and provide a virtual independent study (VIS) option for their families in lieu of in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year. He noted that SSFUSD has an existing relationship with Edgenuity at the high school level for credit recovery. Ed. Services staff has done research and would like to start the process of providing the (VIS) option via Edgenuity. He said if they knew about this law earlier than July, they would have worked with HR to create an independent study program. The program needs to be up and running by the start of the school year. Mr. Irish described this as one of the most viable options and proposed buying ten reusable Edgenuity licenses for elementary and secondary students. Based on their recent survey, the interest from students and parents exceeds those ten licenses. However, if this agreement is approved, he will reach out to Edgenuity to bill the District for additional licenses for families that choose this option.

Vice President Richardson said she understands due to the lateness of the State's decision and the District scrambling, the agreement would be for ten licenses. Mr. Irish replied that he originally put in a proposal for 100 licenses, but Edgenuity informed him that if those licenses were not used, the District would have to pay the full amount of \$230K. He added that tomorrow night Ed. Services is conducting a webinar on the VIS program that the District is proposing to families.

Trustee Chialin Hsieh asked how many families are interested in the VIS program. Mr. Irish said that, as of this morning, 128 families are interested in exploring the option with 66 elementary school students, 36 middle school students, and 26 high school students.

MOTION #219 (Hsieh/Richardson) to approve the agreement with Edgenuity in order to provide Independent Study for students in lieu of in-person instruction for 2021-22. (AYES: Baker, Hsieh, Murray, Richardson; NOES: None). Motion Carried. (Unanimous)

3. BUSINESS SERVICES

a. Approval to Purchase Air Disinfectant Purifiers for School Reopening

Assistant Superintendent Ted O said the proposal is above the threshold amount and requires Board approval. Staff will purchase 250 air purifiers to be placed in every classroom.

Vice President Richardson said she is proud of the District for taking the extra precautions to ensure that the classrooms are clean and that parents can have the confidence that the District is spending a lot of money. She noted that Mr. O and the administrators are putting safety at the forefront and sparing no cost.

Trustee Hsieh also thanked Mr. O for all his great work and for being very proactive to make sure District kids and staff are safe.

COMMUNICATIONS *(continued)*

Andrea Sims asked for clarification on how the air purifiers will be distributed throughout the District and if they will be available for all classrooms. She appreciates staff taking proactive steps to make sure students are safe and comfortable. But with the Delta variant, she wanted to know more details regarding the measures being provided in all classrooms regarding COVID and other safety measures with cleaning classrooms. Mr. O stated that the purifiers will be placed in every District classroom, library, main office, and other areas as needed, such as the multipurpose room, and auditorium. Most of them have been placed in the sites already. Staff is still working on the Adult school, Baden HS, and some sites that wanted additional ones.

MOTION #220 (Murray/Hsieh) to approve the R-Zero Systems, Inc. proposal, in the amount of \$222,357.50, to purchase 250 portable air disinfection purifiers. "Exempt from Public Contract Code Section 20111, pursuant to 2 CFR Section 200.320(c)(3)." (AYES: Baker, Hsieh, Murray, Richardson; NOES: None). Motion Carried. (Unanimous)

1. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approval of SSFUSD and SSF PD MOU for Resource/Liaison Officers on School Campuses

Superintendent Shawnterra Moore said the District has been working in conjunction with the SSF police department and there have been liaison officers on the campuses for many years. Last year, as part of the Board's discussion, there was a realization that there was no formal MOU between the two agencies. Since then, staff have engaged in study sessions, conducted surveys, discussed it at several Board meetings and City Subcommittee meetings along with police and City representatives, to determine whether or not the District wants to maintain a program with the School Liaison Officers (SLO), and if so, what that would include. She said feedback was also elicited from students through focus group sessions. At the January 21, 2021 Board meeting, members of The Coalition of Hope and Action Necessary for Growth and Empowerment (ChangeSSF) presented on their insights and feedback around the SLO program. The Board tasked her and staff to work with the SSF PD and City staff to create an MOU with specific guidelines and agreements for continuing the program. An MOU was created and discussed at a June 8, 2021 City Subcommittee meeting. At their July 15, 2021 meeting, the Board agreed to suspend the program and approved tentative plans and policies should the MOU not be finalized prior to August 11, 2021. Another City Subcommittee meeting occurred on July 26, where District staff as well as City staff discussed several recommended revisions, trying to solidify something prior to the opening of school. During this meeting, two amendments were requested concerning SLO's wearing casual dress as well as the City bearing the cost for any SLO training. City Subcommittee members endorsed and approved the MOU with those amendments. On July 28, the updated MOU was presented to the City Council and several changes were made by Councilmembers. The updated MOU includes the revisions and the amendments that were recommended. At this meeting, the Board had an opportunity to discuss the MOU, determine if they are in agreement with either version 10, which was the initial one, version 11, the one with City Council amendments, or they could choose to make additional changes or introduce their own amendments if they decided to approve it at this meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS *(continued)*

DeVante Jewett said he was against the MOU and the SLO program and wanted to know the real reasons some people are in favor of the program. He feels more

counselors are needed who are qualified to provide comprehensive care to students. The Board needs to hear the voices of youth, students, and the community. Restorative justice service is definitely what is needed to address bullying. He challenged the Board to reflect on the role they play in contributing to a challenging, oppressive system such as having cops on campus that target BIPOC students.

Eddy Holman questioned President Lujan's absence and said this was the second meeting regarding the MOU that she "dodged". He is "sick of playing politics with children in this District". The data indicates that police are doing damage to children and need to be removed from the schools. He then read a letter from the ACLU which stated that black students and students with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted by the police presence in SSFUSD schools. The ACLU supports Change SSF in urging the Board to remove SLO's and establish clear parameters that officers would not be called to any campus unless there is an emergency which requires their presence. The letter also noted that in 2017-18, "black students were referred to law enforcement at a rate over 12 times their rate of enrollment in the District and students with disabilities were referred to law enforcement at a rate 1 and 1/2 times their rate of enrollment." and finds "...a likely overreliance on police officers to handle school behavior that may arise from disability."

Trustee Baker said he wanted to address something without revealing a Trustees' private business. He shared that President Lujan came to the meeting, but was encouraged to go home because she was ill. He stated that she was not trying to dodge anything, but was not feeling well.

Andrea Sims encouraged the Board to reject the MOU and the SLO program in its entirety. She stated that the program is harmful to students, primarily BIPOC students in the District. The Board and City Council have rushed the MOU approval and did not recognize the students who presented factual data and protested against the program. The MOU is illegal and does not provide students their legal rights or an opportunity to call a parent when they are questioned by police. Adults need to protect the students. She said the Board should meet with students and come to a compromise to either remove the SLO program or create an MOU where students feel safe and secure.

Lilliana Rivera said she supports ending the SLO program which surveils, criminalizes, harasses, and racially profiles children. Certain Board members and City Councilmembers are only trying to get the endorsement of the police union. The Board is not going the extra mile to protect parents and students, but that should be at the center of all conversations. She said the Board needs to put in place strict rules for what will happen should an officer break these rules. She encouraged the Board to listen to the students and said it is wrong that the Student Trustees will not be at a meeting when the voting takes place.

Joliza Gomez, a SSFHS student, requested that the Board reject the MOU and keep the SLO program in suspension or ends it entirely. If an emergency occurs on campus, the police will still respond and students will still be safe. She said students are not being

given an opportunity to speak on the MOU since school has not started yet. “They deserve to be aware of their rights on campus and know what they're getting into when they see SLO's at schools.” Student Trustees should be present and have their voices heard during the discussion of a program intended to benefit students. “You cannot say that you are acting in the best interest of the students if there is no student input to help inform your decisions.” She urged the Board to “...spend more time collaborating closely with students in order to help create a school environment that is free from fear and encourages growth, safety, healing, education, and success.”

Brenda Gonzalez, a SSFHS student, said many students see the SLO program not as a way to keep students safe, but to police, rather than protect them. She said several students have had negative interactions with them on campus. The program has reinforced the school to prison pipeline and tells students that the Board views them as a hazard, which needs to be surveilled. Students' rights are not outlined in the MOU, leaving them vulnerable. She said the SLO's in uniforms and armed, are not seen as friends by students. Professional counselors, who are trained and educated in working with students, are needed. The goal is not to bring cops on campus at all, create a safe learning environment, and to fund programs that benefit students.

Aristel De La Cruz, speaking as an educator, said the MOU needs more time. Students are frustrated as they have been coming to meetings and presenting convincing arguments since they were told to follow the process. They spoke about the harm with the presence of armed police who have the power to investigate or arrest students, or collaborate with ICE in terms of deporting students. He said this is a data-driven District, but questioned the data that justifies a police presence in the schools. The positive public comments did not say why they supported the SLO program. He thinks the MOU gives the police a lot of power to circumvent real accountability. He suggested a social justice organization or a third party should review the MOU before it is finalized.

Samantha Avila Gomez, a SSFHS student, said high schools down the peninsula have high scores, good students, and good reputations, but she has not seen a police presence on those campuses. Yet, an armed officer is on the SSFHS campus looking at black and brown students. Police are also more prevalent at Spruce ES and Martin ES than Monte Verde ES or Skyline ES. There is a clear correlation between the student populations and the police. She said, “It scares me so much, knowing that police are around these children and just waiting for them to grow up so they could suddenly become gang members, so they can suddenly wear the wrong color, and they can terrorize them.” She said the emergency meeting to pass the MOU is to “push” cops on students before school starts. She supports not approving the MOU.

Russell Lee commented that SLO's cause disproportionate harm for, black students and students with disabilities. He referenced the previously stated statistics in the ACLU letter regarding black students and students with disabilities being referred to law enforcement disproportionately. He asked if the MOU fixes the problems that have plagued the District for so long. He wants to see mandatory trainings when an administrator calls the police for what seems like racially discriminatory reasons, to

prevent it happening again with other administrators. Based on the ACLU letter, he feels the District fails black and brown students. “We say that we’re for marginalized groups, but we’re also not being...direct at preventing them from being harmed. We’re not using language that has like a racial analysis to it, that has a historical analysis to like what policing is in our schools.”

Marcela Rivera asked the Board to prioritize the students who are asking them to revise the MOU and remove SLO’s from campus. She said during the July 16, 2020 Board meeting, Chief Jeff Azzopardi stated that there had been 17 students arrested in the last five years on campuses, which is a horrible statistic. While positive public comments say the police are part of the community, she has not seen other community members such as nurses, firefighters, or counselors on campuses. She questioned why police need to walk around campus when they would respond to a 911 call for a life-threatening emergency. She asked if the MOU was written by white men who do not know about the experiences of students on school campuses.

Valeria Olguin supports removing SLO’s from campuses and to not approve the current MOU. She said many community members have spoken, in the past year, regarding SLO’s and the Board’s argument is that cops are community members and belong on campuses. She said the police only serve to protect the wealthy, are complacent in the school to prison pipeline, and work only in their best interests. Any brown or black child who has gone through the SSFUSD will say the education system is terrible. During her education, teachers showed a lack of respect for students. She noted a teacher had been arrested in the last few years for doing bad things and an administrator knew about it, which shows students are not being protected.

Joseph Lopez spoke about not approving the MOU and ending the SLO program entirely. He is discontented with how adults in the community are handling public input. Last week he attended the City Council meeting and commented against the MOU and the experiences of his community. He said Mayor Addiego shook his head at him, is disconnected from the community and does not want to listen to those people who continuously say the SLO program is not necessary. “The primary purpose of this program, in the MOU, is to enforce positive attitudes in the community regarding police. But...there is no need for this institution that is supposed to only enforce laws to interact with students on any level besides in an emergency.” He said it is time to re-evaluate the program, listen to community input, and do what makes kids feel safe in a learning environment that benefits and educates them.

Trustee Baker opened up the conversation to the Board on next steps. Trustee Murray recommended they table the discussion until President Lujan can be present since her voice should be heard.

Vice President Richardson said she thought that since this was an action item, the Board needed to vote on it. Trustee Baker said the options are to vote on it or vote to table it.

Vice President Richardson asked Director Ryan Severs how successful the District programs are in improving student behaviors. She said since the District is under pressure to conform to less punitive approaches that is one of the reasons the SLO program is encouraged. The program pushes safety as if the District's schools are not safe, which is the wrong message. They do not want the public to think police on campus are needed in order for students to feel safe. Vice President Richardson questioned the schools that do not have police on campus. She asked Director Sebers how the District will handle disciplinary issues with the new State polices, if the program needs to be enhanced, will the Student Handbook program work the same way, or if the District will need to do more.

Mr. Sebers said he would respond to the question of the general effectiveness of the District programs. Programs and instruction go together to work towards making the environment better for students and to help them learn and increase comprehension awareness and all general improvements, so it is hard to identify specifically which of the many programs could actually be a specific point of improvement. He credited District parents who are working tirelessly to take care of their kids at home and give them the values they need to do well in school. He also credited teachers for all their classroom instruction, their preparation, and their hard work. Both groups are part of the improvement generally seen throughout the District. SSFUSD has established programs such as counseling programs and mental health support and programs dealing with disciplinary measures or interventions such as Alternative to Suspension and Alternative to Expulsion. Mr. Sebers spoke about a 14-year data point that shows the effectiveness of some programs. In 2006-07, the District had 1,645 suspensions that occurred that year, and in 2019-20, which is the last point with suspensions because there were no suspensions during distance learning, the District has 352 suspensions, which represents a steady decrease of 78.6%. There were also 61 expulsions in the 2006-07 school year and six expulsions in 2019-20, which represents a 90.16% decrease. He said the cumulative effect of instruction, really good parents at home, some of the new programs, counseling, and mental health support, have all resulted in what is being seen now.

Vice President Richardson said she continues to be impressed with the numbers, but noted Mr. Sebers did not say they were the result of the SLO program. The numbers were a result of a systemic change in embracing more counseling and behavior modification for a comprehensive approach. She said the District suffers from an image problem, with many people thinking that if SLO's are removed from the campuses, schools will be unsafe. That is furthest from the truth. She

said the District cannot improve its image until we begin to right the wrongs of the past. It is time to re-evaluate a program begun in the '80's. She would like to enhance the use of campus police for those times when they feel they are needed.

Trustee Baker confirmed that the Student Trustees will be in attendance at next week's meeting.

Trustee Hsieh asked for clarification on the process. Trustee Baker replied that the Board would need to decide whether they would vote on the MOU or table it. He then said he had a brief statement to make. Trustee Murray asked if he would rather have President Lujan present for his statement. Vice President Richardson agreed with Trustee Murray and said there might be a tie vote with only four Board members. It was agreed that the MOU would be tabled until Dr. Moore and President Lujan can include it in a future meeting.

Trustee Baker said he prefers the MOU be scheduled in a regular Board meeting and not in a special meeting. He shared that he has 26 possible suggestions for the tracked changes. To establish a process, he recommended the Board members share their suggestions for amending the MOU. He said an MOU would not fix everything, but an agreement is needed to protect students and their interests, not just with SLO's, but also with police in general. With the suspension in place right now, there is no rush to have a signed MOU before the school year starts. Trustee Baker suggested having a more representative body, five Board members, plus Student Trustees to have a better discussion.

MOTION #221 (Murray/Richardson) to approve tabling the MOU discussion until President Lujan and Superintendent Moore can determine an appropriate time when it will fit in the Board meetings schedule. (AYES: Baker, Hsieh, Murray, Richardson; NOES: None). Motion Carried (Unanimous)

Trustee Hsieh said she appreciates the public comments from students, alumni, parents, teachers, and the community. At the last meeting, she had the impression that the Board wanted to get an MOU established, but now the public thinks they are rushing it and excluding some people, which is not their intention. She also appreciates the partnership and collaboration with City leadership. In particular, she thanked Chief Azzopardi, for his willingness, collaboration, and for listening. She also thanked Dr. Moore, for her leadership and that of her the team for putting in a lot of time into the MOU in addition to dealing with school opening, COVID-19, and making sure students,

staff, teachers, and everyone else is safe in this pandemic environment.

Dr. Moore said she appreciated the public comments and what Dr. Hsieh said. This has been a long journey. The Board gave direction for staff to come up with an MOU. There were a few City Subcommittee meetings and the revisions that were brought forward were based on the community input and feedback from the Trustees. She acknowledged that there are four Board members at this meeting. Although President Lujan's voice is appreciated, sometimes there may not be a full Board, but they have a body there with an opportunity to speak to whatever the recommended changes are going to be. She and President Lujan will look for another date, but they need to always keep it in perspective. A lot of community input has been incorporated into the MOU, but she does not want to get into a pattern where they think they almost have it, then they receive new feedback, and need to create a new version. Dr. Moore said she respects the direction of the Board to suspend the program, to wait, and to come back to the table. She wants to make sure to follow through on direction that was given to make sure they come up with an MOU that will serve the needs of the students. Student feedback was integral and she led several focus groups with students to elicit a lot of that feedback. She does not think they are going to get every individual person's perspective, but is hopeful that they find a way to come to a place where the students feel comfortable and safe if the District continues to have an SLO program, which she thinks is still the intent of the Board. They are not rushing the process, but she understood the goal was to have an MOU in place by the beginning of the school year. By working collaboratively and collectively, she and her team will bring back an MOU that is amenable to the entire school board.

Trustee Baker said the Board recognizes but may not express, how many projects the Superintendent is working on. The Board realizes that getting the new school year started is the priority.

The Board recessed at 8:30 p.m. for a break and reconvened at 8:40 p.m.

The Board discussed a process for each Trustee to provide their proposed MOU changes. Trustee Baker suggested each Board member, who has feedback, send it to the Superintendent and she would present them simultaneously with the weekly Board packet so they all see them at the same time. To prevent a serial meeting, the Trustees would not discuss the changes amongst themselves until they get to the Board meeting. Another idea he proposed was for the Board to send their suggestions to Dr. Moore, she would then look for

commonalities, and then provide a new draft incorporating them. Dr. Moore said, to be mindful, the final MOU needs to be a unified document. Dr. Hsieh said she liked the idea of giving the Superintendent feedback, rather than spending time reviewing the MOU line by line during a Board meeting. Trustee Baker said he was reluctant to give Cabinet a lot more work, but knows there are some more things that the Board needs to say. He asked if it was possible to send Dr. Moore a draft and she would let the Board know, anonymously, what suggestions were made by the Trustees. He recognized that this is a time commitment. Trustee Baker summarized the process in which each Trustee would send any MOU adjustments to the Superintendent, she would provide the unidentified Trustee suggestions, and they would then, hopefully, have a document to vote on at some point in time. Once approved, it would be sent to the City for their approval as is. Dr. Moore confirmed she will work with President Lujan and communicate a deadline for Trustee feedback and a Board meeting date for discussion and approval. Trustee Baker reiterated that the SLO program will remain suspended until an MOU is voted on.

ADJOURNMENT - 8:46 p.m.