CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

84 EAST "J" STREET • CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA 91910 • (619) 425-9600
EACH CHILD IS AN INDIVIDUAL OF GREAT WORTH

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting
March 16, 2021
5 P.M.
Dr. Lowell J. Billings Board Room, Education Service and Support Service
Streamed Online

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. OPENING PROCEDURES

Opening Procedures

A. Call to Order

President Reyes called the meeting to order at 5:08 P.M.

B. Roll Call

Dr. Eduardo Reyes, President
Ms. Kate Bishop, Vice President (Virtually)
Ms. Lucy Ugarte, Clerk (Virtually)
Mrs. Leslie Ray Bunker, Member
Mr. Francisco Tamayo, Member

Members Absent:
None.

Others Present:
Dr. Francisco Escobedo, Superintendent
Mr. Oscar Esquivel, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Jeffrey Thiel, Asst. Supt., Human Resources
Dr. Matthew Tessier, Asst. Supt., Innovation and Instruction (Virtually)
Mrs. Soreli M. Norton, Asst. to the Supt. and Board of Education

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Escobedo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVE AGENDA (Action)

Approve Agenda

Prior to approval of the agenda, Vice President Bishop inquired regarding discussion of the hybrid model being an information item and asked if it allows for a vote on the timeframe, as discussed at the last meeting.

Dr. Escobedo explained that since it is an information item, it does not allow for action. Vice President Bishop requested it be changed to an action item, which cannot be done, as it needs to be posted as such 24 hours prior to the meeting. Dr. Escobedo explained if the Board feels changes are necessary, another special meeting could be called or a vote scheduled at the regular meeting on April 14. Vice President Bishop stated the vote at the previous Board meeting was not to open schools and that Dr. Escobedo had said the Board could create parameters. Board Member Tamayo clarified that the vote had been to authorize transition with a check-in with the Board at the current meeting to see if steps in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) [with Chula Vista Educators, CVE] were being met and if the District is on a good roadmap to continue plans to reopen. He stated he wants to ensure the MOU is followed as closely as possible to avoid unfair labor practices. Vice President Bishop clarified the Board would not be able to act on the information they would hear during the meeting other than possibly set another meeting. President Reyes stated the Board can direct the Superintendent to take action within MOU parameters.

Motion: TAMAYO, Second: BUNKER, Vote: UNANIMOUS

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS *Oral Communications*

The Oral Communications portion of this special meeting provides the public with information regarding addressing the Board, as follows: The public has the opportunity to be heard on any items included in the agenda. Speakers are requested to limit their remarks to three minutes (approximately 390 words). Community members wishing to comment should call (619) 679-9001. The Board shall limit the total time for public input on each topic to 20 minutes. With Board consent, the President may increase or decrease the time allowed for public presentation depending on the subject and the number of persons wishing to be heard. No Board action can be taken.

President Reyes said there would be a new procedure for public comments and instead of written comments, community members would be able to participate by phone. He also explained that because it is a special Board meeting, items addressed must be on the agenda. He added callers would be heard when the item they wish to address is being discussed.

4. APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR *Consent Calendar*

Motion: TAMAYO, Second: UGARTE, Vote: UNANIMOUS

A. Approve and/or Ratify Human Resources Items A Through C **2020-21.062**

B. Authorize the District to Recruit and Hire Temporary Teachers for Hybrid Learning for Campus Support

C. Approve Temporary Increase of Daily Rates for Certificated Substitute Employees

D. Ratify Third Amendment to the Agreement with South Bay Family YMCA for the Dynamic After-School Hours Program for the Period of March 1 Through June 30, 2021

5. BOARD WORKSHOP

Board Workshop

A. Update Regarding Chula Vista Elementary School District's Preparation for the Hybrid Model and Conditions Meeting the November 13 and December 16, 2020, Memorandums of Understanding with Chula Vista Educators

Dr. Escobedo said the Board would hear from a variety of experts on how the District is preparing to reopen in a hybrid model, stressing that parents would have the option until the end of the year to stay in distance learning. He said there would be time after each speaker for questions. Dr. Escobedo introduced the presenters:

[San Diego County Office of Education] County Duty Officer/Assistant Incident Commander COVID-19 Emergency Operations and Coordinator Special Projects Bob Mueller – Mr. Mueller provided a "situation briefing," providing data on how the county is fairing and placed that information in the context of school reopening. He mentioned the county's dashboard with 13 metrics and said the county has been moving in the right direction for some time, giving a brief history of where it was a year ago. Mr. Mueller showed a map of the county with data for jurisdictions where districts have been providing full-time in-person or hybrid instruction for elementary students and showed where the District is—in the middle of the pack. He explained that in districts that have been open since September or October 2020, transmissions have been exceptionally low—lower than in the community by far. He said the county is in the Red Tier and explained how that happened. Mr. Mueller stated schools are cleared to begin reopening the following day (March 17) but must have COVID-19 safety plans posted on their website at least five days prior to reopening, saying there is no requirement for external review of the plans. He remarked the reopening window is March 17-April 6, and if a local educational agency (LEA) reopens during that time, the LEA's reopening is guaranteed regardless of the county's tier status. Mr. Mueller added that after April 6, reopening is contingent on the county's tier status and that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) stated it will work on a phased reopening with LEAs that will be on spring break that overlap the window and prevents from reopening while eligible.

Sharp Chief Medical Officer Dr. Samer Khodor – Dr. Khodor thanked the District for the invitation to participate, said he is a parent of elementary-

age children, and thanked educators for all they do and for their important role. He reviewed vaccines Pfizer, Moderna, and Jansen (Johnson & Johnson), explaining how they work (messenger RNA or viral vector), who are these approved for (people 18 and over), how many doses are needed of each (two for Pfizer and Moderna and one for Jansen), the time in between doses (21 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna), efficacy (how well a vaccine does in clinical trials) vs. effectiveness (how well it does in real life), common side effects (sore arm, fever, headache, body aches, and fatigue), timeframe for vaccine to fully protect (two weeks after second dose), and length of protection (being studied). Dr. Khodor said all three vaccines protect very well and essentially there have been no COVID-19 hospitalizations or deaths among those fully vaccinated. He also shared vaccination statistics in the county, nation, and world and covered what fully vaccinated people can do. Dr. Khodor said we should trust the science and continue wearing masks [even after being vaccinated] and stressed that the best vaccine is the first one available. He emphasized the importance of getting vaccinated, because the longer COVID-19 spreads unchecked, the more mutations can develop; and said studies have shown reasonable if not impressive protections against most of the variants.

Associate Director of Scripps Family Medicine Residency Program Dr. Shaila Serpas – Dr. Serpas shared overall safety procedures followed at Scripps and the impacts she observes when taking care of families that reside in District boundaries. She discussed results seen in other United States schools and commented that outbreaks are generally from not following core guidance—specifically on the use of masks and keeping social distancing. Dr. Serpas shared the Scripps Residency Program's success in keeping residency participants safe and stressed the importance of overlapping core practices, as well as adding other practices such as having good ventilation, filters, and opening doors and windows. She noted her observations about the short- and long-term physical, mental, and emotional health effects of inactivity in students, such as children gaining weight, isolation and lack of social development, youngsters thinking about and attempting suicide, and increased exposure to adverse child experiences (ACEs) such as domestic violence, divorce, and neglect. Dr. Serpas said that even though these cases are happening at a state and national level, she is also seeing them in our community. She said that due to these ACEs, which now includes morbidities related to cardiovascular health, etc., as quickly as possible even in small scale, in small numbers, and hybrid it is of vital importance to think how we have been disproportionally impacting families, especially families of color and those families of frontline workers, adding that vaccine equity will lower the impact of the burden of COVID.

Assistant Professor at the University of California, San Diego, Dr. Rebecca Fielding-Miller, who leads a team as part of a partnership

with the County of San Diego to develop wastewater and surface monitoring strategies that detect asymptomatic COVID-19 infections in schools before they become outbreaks and has been working at Castle Park and Rice – Dr. Fielding-Miller presented information related to cases per 100,000 in each age group (0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 40-49, 70-79), saying the lowest rates have been for children under 10 years of age and a nice decline continues to be seen, which she believes has to do with the shelter in place ordered by the Governor and also with the vaccination rollout. She mentioned she is keeping an eye on what is happening in other countries where a variant became the dominant strain and said a race is on in the United States to get as many people as possible vaccinated before the B11 strain takes off. Dr. Fielding-Miller said the nice thing about being in public health is that she gets to think a lot about what can be done and that she has been working with the County of San Diego and some schools in the county—including Castle Park and Rice—on a system created with an eye on equity to monitor schools constantly. She explained the system does aggregate anonymous monitoring (meaning nobody signs up for testing) that gives a general sense of what is going on in the school. It consists of 1) environmental monitoring: a robot that sits on top of the sewage cleanout to collect samples every 15 minutes; and 2) surface monitoring: teachers collecting samples by rubbing a fancy Q-tip on the ground. The samples are sent to the lab and 36 hours after they are received, the lab can alert the school if somebody is potentially shedding virus on the campus so testing can then take place in specific rooms. Dr. Fielding-Miller said the system has been in place since November and is working very well; she showed and explained data from testing results at Castle Park and at Rice.

President Reyes called a recess at 6:43 P.M. and reconvened at 6:48 P.M.

Facilities Planning, Risk Management, and Legal Services Executive Director Anthony Carlton presented information on the foundations in place for providing a safe environment for reopening. He touched on physical distancing, increased cleaning and hygiene, health monitoring and contact tracing, personal protective equipment and other safety supplies, behavioral signage, and consistent communications. Mr. Carlton also explained District testing protocols; gave details regarding District testing partnerships; and reviewed County vaccination timelines for education employees, including recent efforts to roll out the vaccine to District employees.

Dr. Tessier presented on the hybrid model and related logistics. His presentation addressed the timeline for opening in a hybrid model; included hybrid scenarios given that the County was officially in the Red Tier on the day of the meeting; and shared and explained a hybrid model sample schedule based on two cohorts of students, one attending during mornings and the second one attending during afternoons. Dr. Tessier

also discussed plans for social-emotional learning training sessions for employees and talked about mental health support opportunities the District is exploring.

Board Members thanked the presenters for the wealth of information they provided. They also asked an assortment of questions, which were addressed by the presenters, Dr. Escobedo, Mr. Esquivel, Dr. Thiel, and/or Executive Director Chris Vickers; and made a variety of comments on the topic in general and on portions of the information presented.

There were eight original callers, with a ninth call coming in later. President Reyes increased the time to receive input from 20 to 24 minutes, and thanked callers for their patience [as they had to wait a long time to be heard].

- Special Education Teacher Jessica Howard – On concerns and questions regarding reopening.
- CVE Vice President Rosa Martinez – On wonderings and concerns regarding the transition to the hybrid model.
- Ms. Poukkula – On concerns regarding the hybrid model.
- Parent Nicole LeClair – Asking if the District is looking at going back in person full time.
- Parent Scott Anderson – Thanking the District community for working hard and asking the Board to keep politics out of school reopening decisions.
- Teacher Ruby Zamora Baker – On concerns regarding the process for reopening.
- Teacher Vanessa Braito – Stating teachers want to return to classrooms, on concerns with reopening schools this late in the school year, and suggesting a plan is developed for reopening in July.
- CVE Board Member/Teacher/Parent Lisandra Cazares de Gomez – Thanking the Board for engaging in reopening discussions and with concerns regarding several components of the reopening plan. Expressing equity concerns with the new way of addressing the Board.
- Parent Ana Arboleda – On concerns regarding students who are falling behind due to distance learning not being able to cater to individual learning styles. Suggesting comments are addressed as the meeting goes on and not at the very end.

Board Members asked for additional information and made suggestions or requests on several subjects, as follows:

- Counselors (Board Member Tamayo).
- Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (Clerk Ugarte).
- Costs of environmental testing (Vice President Bishop).

- Posting of school walkthrough videos (Board Member Bunker).
- Reporting of COVID-19 Prevention Program violations (Clerk Ugarte).
- Federal standardized testing waiver (Vice President Bishop).
- Plans to address learning loss (President Reyes).
- Efforts to hire additional teachers/substitutes, especially special education and dual immersion to assist with the hybrid model (Clerk Ugarte).
- Visual and Performing Arts programs schedule with equal access for all students (President Reyes).
- District's social-emotional plan (President Reyes).
- Keeping the Board apprised of any issues or delays that may arise (President Reyes).

President Reyes called for a recess at 9:23 P.M. and reconvened at 9:28 P.M.

B. Overview of the District's Budget Development Process and District Budget

Mr. Esquivel presented information regarding the District budget development process; gave an overview of the budget, General Fund revenues, and General Fund expenditures; and covered District enrollment. He explained the state budget process timeline and explained how it affects the District budget.

Mr. Esquivel covered a number of topics under each area, such as critical budget development milestones; the District's fiscal responsibility, namely to meet its fiscal obligations; state budget certifications; State School District Criteria and Standards Report; Second Interim expenditures by fund; 2020-21 General Fund budget summary including unrestricted and restricted funds; multiyear projections and major assumptions; the historical Reserve for Economic Uncertainties (REU) and state average REUs; major state K-12 Education General Fund revenue sources; cumulative retirement costs; special education expenditures; staffing surveys for a variety of District offices/departments; indirect cost rates for San Diego county districts; and enrollment statistics for District schools.

Board Members thanked Mr. Esquivel for the report, commended him and his staff for the work they do, asked questions that he addressed, and commented on a variety of areas related to the budget.

Vice President Bishop requested a presentation on COVID-19 monies—specifically how much funding the District has received and how the funds were spent. She also asked the presentation include information regarding how much more COVID-19 funds the District expects to receive and where it plans to spend it.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment

Prior to adjournment of the meeting, Vice President Bishop requested an additional special meeting to verify that the requirements discussed at the meeting were fulfilled prior to reopening. Board Member Bunker said she did not think a meeting was necessary—that a report might suffice. President Reyes said that collectively, the Board could direct the Superintendent to take action one way or the other and that the options were to set up a meeting or set up a timeline and asked if a timeline would suffice.

Vice President Bishop expressed her concerns and brought up a number of points:

- The "what ifs," such as the fact that the county is in the Red Tier but the District is not and that none of the District zip codes are below 7 cases per 1,000.
- Staff members have not necessarily received the first dose of the vaccine and at that point in time, it would be beyond the reopening.
- It should be the Board who determines if everything has been accomplished regarding preparations and decide on the yes or no vote to reopen.
- Separate from the MOU, the Board can decide it wants the effectiveness of the vaccine to kick in and that staff needs to be vaccinated prior to reopening in order to keep people safe.
- Current conditions may be the "eye of the hurricane" and spikes may be seen after Spring Break.
- People are scared out of their minds.
- Parents have a choice but teachers do not.

Additional discussion ensued, including:

- The MOU with CVE, which states District schools can reopen when the county, not the District, is in the Red Tier.
- The Board is interested in making vaccines available for its employees and has worked with the County of San Diego and with VEBA [Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association], but vaccination is not part of the MOU or the reopening plan.
- Integrating the requirements of the District being in the Red Tier and that employees are vaccinated before reopening constitutes changes to the MOU, which would necessitate additional bargaining.
- Following the mitigation procedures that are set up suffices to protect people. The vaccine has been offered and people have had opportunities to be vaccinated.
- Principals have signaled they are ready and only waiting for the green light to reopen.
- The District has fulfilled and exceeded most of the MOU criteria, if not all of it.

- The safety training has been delivered to classified employees and will be provided to certificated staff members and will be ongoing.
- Many places with higher case rates have reopened in person, some of them since September.
- The District is ready to start on March 17 if the Board wishes—it will not—but it is ready to do so. As a problem solver that brings everyone to work together, the District will be able to handle and solve any concerns that may arise.
- There is a lot of anxiety, which is understandable, but the District has compassionate teachers and other staff members, and reopening can happen.
- Parents have been advocating for schools to reopen and the District needs to stop putting roadblocks.
- No reopening plan will be perfect and districts that do reopen will have to make adjustments.
- The District has done as much as it can to take precautions and make it safe for everyone.
- It is time to help students for whom distance learning is not working and for whom even 155 minutes a day of in-person instruction will make a big difference.
- Parents will have a choice to stay in distance learning if they wish.

President Reyes asked for weekly updates on where the District is regarding reopening, that the Board be included in communications to parents and schools, and that principals also communicate with their school communities. Clerk Ugarte requested to know how principals are supporting their staff members throughout the transition.

President Reyes adjourned the meeting at 10:10 P.M.

Motion: TAMAYO, Second: BUNKER, Vote: UNANIMOUS

Francisco Escobedo, Ed.D., Secretary

Lucy Ugarte, Clerk