APPROVED MINUTES
ALUM ROCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
2930 Gay Avenue
San Jose, CA 95127

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
of the Alum Rock Union School District
Held on Thursday, August 14, 2025, 5:30 p.m. at
Alum Rock Union Elementary School District – Board Room
Board Members and Superintendent participated at
2930 Gay Avenue San Jose, CA 95127
Meeting #04-25/26

1. OPEN SESSION – CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

1.1 Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance - President Linda Chavez.

President Linda Chavez welcomed everyone and called the Board Meeting to order at 5:31 pm, followed by Roll Call. Board Members present were Linda Chavez (President), Andrés Quintero (Vice-President), Minh Pham (Clerk), Corina Herrera-Loera (Member), and Minh Nguyen (Member).

Administrative and Support Staff Members present were Sandra Garcia (Acting Superintendent), Teresa DeCelles (Assistant Superintendent, Business Services), Cesar Torrico (Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources), and Patricia Tovar (Interim Sr. Executive Assistant, Superintendent's Office).
(The meeting was recorded.)

1.2 Discussion and/or Modification(s) of the Agenda.

MOTION #01-04 by Clerk Minh Pham to accept the order of the agenda. MOTION #01-04 was seconded by Member Corina Herrera-Loera.

MOTION #01-04 carried* with a *vote of 5 in favor; no opposition; 0 absent; and 0 abstentions.

2. PUBLIC MEMBERS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Public Comment: Maimona Afzal Berta, Veronica Talton, David Williams, Natalie Dowd Abal, Daisy Madrigal, Vince Tran, Delia Navarro, Veronica Amador, Isabella, Claudia Cuello, (teacher?), Celerina Mendoza, Christina Villarreal, Rubi Solis, (parent?).

3. CLOSED SESSION

The following Closed Sessions Items to be discussed:
3.2 Public Employee Appointment/Employment: Acting/Interim Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services, Principal on Special Assignment (POSA), and Bond Program Director;
3.3 Conference with Legal Counsel-Appeal of Investigative Findings;
3.4 Conference with Labor Negotiators;
3.5 Conference with Real Property Negotiators
3.6 Conference with Legal Counsel-Anticipated Litigation;
3.7 Conference with Legal Counsel-Existing Litigation;
3.8 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release.

The Board recessed to Closed Session at 5:55 p.m. and anticipates to return from closed session in 1-2 hours.

4. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION – DISTRICT OFFICE BOARD ROOM

4.1 Report of Action Taken in Closed Session.

The Board reconvened to Open Session at 8:28 p.m.

Assistant Superintendent Torrico reported the following:
3.2 Public Employee Appointment/Employment

MOTION #02-04 by Member Corina Herrera-Loera and was seconded by Vice President Andrés Quintero. The Board by a unanimous vote approved the appointment of Stephanie Monroe as our Principal on Special Assignment.

The District's Legal Counsel, Rogelio Ruiz, reported the following:
3.3 Conference with Legal Counsel-Appeal of Investigative Findings

MOTION #03-04 the Board by a unanimous vote approved to reject the appeal of the findings, as to the complaint of employee MC.

******* THE BOARD REOPENED THE AGENDA *******

TO MOVE 6.1 Consider and Approve Acting/Interim Superintendent's Contract AFTER 4.1 Report of Action Taken in Closed Session.

MOTION #04-04 by Clerk Minh Pham to reopen the agenda and move item 6.1 after item 4.1. MOTION #04-04 was seconded by Vice President Andrés Quintero.

MOTION #04-04 carried* with a *vote of 5 in favor; no opposition; 0 absent; and 0 abstentions.

6. SUPERINTENDENT / BOARD BUSINESS

6.1 Consider and Approve Acting/Interim Superintendent's Contract

District legal counsel presented the contract for the Board's consideration and approval is a contract for Interim Superintendent between the District and Mrs. Sandra Garcia for a term through June 30th, 2026. At a monthly salary rate, base salary rate of $21,833.34. Copies of the agreement are available on the table outside of the Boardroom.

MOTION #05-04 by Member Corina Herrera-Loera to approve the Interim Superintendent's Sandra Garcia's Contract as presented. MOTION #05-04 was seconded by Member Minh Pham.

MOTION #05-04 carried* with a *vote of 5 in favor; no opposition; 0 absent; and 0 abstentions.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment: None

5. COMMENTS / COMMUNICATION

5.1 Teamsters – None

5.2 California School Employee's Association (CSEA) – None

5.3 Alum Rock Educator's Association (AREA) – Sandra Rivera– Welcome all to the start of the new school year and the concerns of the recent alleged financial reports misconducted by any of the board members.

5.4 Alum Rock Administrator's Association (ARAA) – None

5.5 Acting Superintendent – Thank you to the Board for your confidence and taking on this role in moving our district forward into the future as I begin my 35th year at Alum Rock; We've had two first successful days; SCCOE notified the District that FCMAT will be conducting an extraordinary audit of the district's expenditure and reimbursement process.

5.6 Board of Trustees / Communications / Comments –

Clerk Minh Pham stated that welcomes the upcoming extraordinary audit by FCMAT, which will end the speculation and clear the air. Also, congratulated Interim Superintendent Sandra Garcia;

Member Corina Herrera-Loera thanked all that attended at the Mayfair Community Center backpack giveaway event following other important events. Thank you, Pastor Danny Sanchez, and thank you to Councilmember Peter Ortiz for all your efforts. Congratulations Sandra-thank you for taking it on and hitting the ground running. Hearing the serious allegations first time on NBC news -glad to have the SCCOE begin the audit, not an investigation. Sent request to the Acting Superintendent and Board President an item for the next scheduled board meeting outlining 'How much of us have received in reimbursements, to include, if any, monthly paycheck for stipends as well?';

Vice President Andrés Quintero had a great time at the City Peace Project

5. COMMENTS / COMMUNICATION (continued)

5.6 Board of Trustees / Communications / Comments

distributing backpacks coordinated by Pastor Danny and team. Addressing the recent issues that have been raised, reading a statement to clarify the issues:

"In light of the baseless accusations made against me by former Superintendent German Cerda Luna, I feel it is necessary to set the record straight. The core of Mr. Cerda Luna's claims revolves around my participation in professional development. An opportunity that is not only the standard, but encouraged for board members across California. In alignment with Alum Rock's own board policies, board members are permitted to utilize professional development funds for conferences or coursework at accredited colleges and universities. This policy was adopted in June 25th of 2020. It was approved unanimously by a 5-0 vote of this board.

As I've stated publicly, while the options exist to attend conferences, I elected to use my allotted funds for academic coursework. (In other words, I could have dedicated the $5,000.00 that are allotted to board members to go to conferences, but instead, I chose to use it for coursework.) This decision is entirely within the bounds of our district's policy. To be clear, every reimbursement request I submitted followed the proper procedures and was reviewed and approved by the district administration. At no point do board members have the authority to issue or request payments directly. My reimbursements were reviewed and signed by then Superintendent Dr. Hilaria Bauer and later by Interim Superintendent Manny Barbara. These approvers, these approvals were also processed through the district business office.

Its deeply concerning that a former employee, now unaffiliated with the district is making reckless statements that insinuate wrongdoing where none exist. His allegations not only misrepresent the facts, but also unfairly cast doubt on the integrity of two respected former superintendents who follow district protocol. Due to state laws governing privacy and legal risks associated with personnel matters, current board members and district staff are limited in what we can publicly share regarding the separation of former employees. Mr. Cerda Luna no longer bound by these constraints can make public claims without the same accountability. A fact that creates a misleading, one-sided narrative.

In the spirit of full transparency, which Mr. Cerda Luna has publicly claimed to support, I encourage him to authorize release of his own personnel file. The Alum Rock Community deserves facts, not insinuations. While I remain committed to transparency and accountability, I will not be silent in the face of false and damaging accusations. I stand by my record, the process I followed, and the integrity with which I have always served the Alum Rock Community. I welcome a thorough and independent review by the appropriate third-party agency to assess the facts. I'm confident in the integrity of my actions, but should any legitimate issues be identified, I'm fully committed to working with the district to resolve them responsibly, transparently, in accordance with the law, and not one man's opinion.

At the next board meeting, I will request an item on the agenda, eliminating payments for conferences and professional developments, so as to avoid these issues in the future.

Additionally, in light of the recent public statements made by former Superintendent German Cerda Luna, I want to clarify and correct the false impression being

5. COMMENTS / COMMUNICATION (continued)

5.6 Board of Trustees / Communications / Comments

presented regarding my health benefits contribution during my time on the Alum Rock Union School District Board. My Cerda Luna has claimed that I wasn't paying my required regarding my health benefits contribution during my time on the Alum Rock Union 15% health benefit premiums, an assertion that is not only misleading, but directly contradicted by statements issued by his own administration at the time. In official correspondence with Mr. Cerda Luna's administration, the district clearly acknowledged the following- This was not a situation of your making. The overpayment of your health benefits premium occurred due to administrative oversight within the district. Your board stipend was applied towards your required 15% contribution heath benefits, but the remaining balance was not invoiced or collected from you as it should have been. Further, the district stated, we fully recognize the situation resulted from internal district processes and not from any action on your part. The language makes it abundantly clear that any lapse in collection of was due to a district administration error. Not a failure or refusal on my part. Once the error was identified, the matter was addressed and steps have been taken by the district to ensure that further compliance. There are a new monthly invoicing system put in place.

It's disheartening that Mr. Cerda Luna continues to make public statements and omit these key facts. Distort the record and suggest unethical behavior when none exists. These statements misrepresent not only my conduct, the very findings and actions of the administration, he led. I remain committed to transparency. I trust that the community can see these attempts to rewrite the past for personal and political purposes. I will continue to serve with integrity and correct the record when the facts are misrepresented.";

President Linda Chavez attended Orenda event at the Mexican Heritage and Ms. La Salles did an amazing job presenting. Helped with traffic duty on the first day at Hubbard School. We had a budget meeting last week and saw some discrepancies which will be having a conversation with the new interim superintendent. Also looking forward to the audit results of the extraordinary audit to work together with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE). The district made an error on the trustee's insurances. Overages for 3 years that the district paid the trustees 100% of the insurance and it should have been 85%, which is a15% payback for the 3 years. I'm paying it back and current on my invoicing. Congratulations again to Interim Superintendent Sandra Garcia.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES

7.1 Approve New Job Description – Middle School Instructional Coach

MOTION #06-04 by Vice President Andrés Quintero to approve new job description, Middle School Instructional Coach. MOTION #06-04 was seconded by Member Corina Herrera-Loera.

MOTION #06-04 carried* with a *vote of 4 in favor; no opposition; 1 absent (Clerk Minh Pham); and no abstention.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES

7.2 Resignations

8. BUSINESS SERVICES

8.1 Resolution No. 04-25/26 Annual Authorized Signatures

MOTION #07-04 by Vice President Andrés Quintero to approve Resolution No. 04-25/26 Annual Authorized Signatures. MOTION #07-04 was seconded by Vice President Andrés Quintero.

MOTION #07-04 carried* with a *vote of 4 in favor; no opposition; 1 absent (Clerk Minh Pham); and no abstention.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION #08-04 by Member Corina Herrera-Loera to approve the Consent Calendar Items 9.1 thru 9.6. MOTION #08-04 was seconded by President Linda Chavez.

MOTION #08-04 carried* with a *vote of 4 in favor; no opposition; 1 absent (Clerk Minh Pham); and no abstention.

10. ADJOURNMENT

10.1 President Adjourns the Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Minh Pham, Board Clerk

gc/pt