

**APPROVED**

MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: November 19, 2025

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

Board Members Present: Susan Alvaro, Edith Arias (left at 9:14 p.m.), Chelsea Bonini, Beverly Gerard, Patricia Love, Mike O’Neill, Hugo Torres

Staff Officials Present: Marco Chávez, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division;  
Jennifer Perna, Executive Assistant

Staff Officials Absent: Nancy Magee, Superintendent

Other Staff Present: Ian Bain, Kevin Bultema, Tami Moore, Jae Takahashi, 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 O’Neill and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the November 19, 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
- Karen Kee, Oceanlight founding member

**PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)**

- Yvonne Chan, Los Angeles County Board of Education Trustee and Association of California County Board of Education (ACCBE) Board Member
- Meghann Elsbernd, President, Laguna Salada Education Foundation
- Kathleen Beebe, California Teachers Association (CTA)
- Joan Weideman, Oceanlight founding member
- Sandy Mills, retired teacher
- Christina Lee, Oceanlight Board Member and parent
- Jen Hsu, Oceanlight Board Member
- Don Burdette, Oceanlight Board Member and teacher

**3. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

- A. November 2025 Employee of the Month Anne Ton, Public Communications Specialist, Office of the Superintendent

Board President Torres recognized the November 2025 Employee of the Month Anne Ton, Public Communications Specialist, Office of the Superintendent, and honored her on behalf of the Board.

**4. INTRODUCTION OF NEW/RECENTLY PROMOTED STAFF**

- A. Introduction of Ernesto Lomeli Rodriguez, Supervisor, Information Systems, District Business Services, Business Services Division

Ernesto Lomeli Rodriguez introduced himself in his new role as Supervisor, Information Systems, District Business Services, Business Services Division.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. October 22, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Board Member O'Neill and a second by Board Member Gerard, the Minutes of the October 22, 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).

- B. November 5, 2025, Governance Workshop

After a motion by Board Member O'Neill and a second by Board Member Love, the Minutes of the November 5, 2025, Governance Workshop were unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- B. Receive Staffing Reports
- C. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 25-61 Recognizing November 2025 as National Native American Heritage Month
- D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 25-63 Honoring Rhonda Leung on Her Retirement

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

7. **BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION**

- A. Receive Report on the Implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Financial System

Dhanya Unni, Executive Director, District Business Services, Business Services Division, and Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, provided a report on the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) financial system.

Board Member Alvaro discussed the reliability of the cloud, noting that occasional outages can disrupt critical functions such as payroll or bill payments, and asked how one can “back up a backup” rather than relying 100% on the cloud. Deputy Superintendent Bultema explained that while there is reliance on the cloud provider’s built-in redundancies, local safeguards have also been put in place so systems can stay connected. There is always some risk with the provider’s servers, but since the system currently serves around 43 counties, there is a sense of shared resilience and “safety in numbers.”

Board Member Alvaro described a recent cloud outage that disrupted major platforms and raised concerns over what happens if the cloud fails since local backups can’t prevent downtime. Deputy Superintendent Bultema noted that while on-site servers could add redundancy, they bring cybersecurity risks, so the industry standard is cloud hosting.

Board Member Alvaro asked if Frontline relies fully on the cloud. Executive Director Unni explained that while Frontline prefers hosted cloud systems for new customers, some older counties still use on-premise servers, although those bring added security risks.

Board Member O’Neill asked if the new system allow districts to forecast scenarios like declining enrollment, school closures, labor negotiations, and financial impacts. Deputy Superintendent Bultema noted that while it can’t directly predict closures, it provides strong financial tools, such as modeling salary and benefit changes, generating cost reports, building multi-year projections, and analyzing site-level costs, making forecasting and scenario planning more detailed and connected to staffing and budgeting.

Board Member O’Neill asked whether the system could operate in a cost-center model, showing how much each school costs to run. Deputy Superintendent Bultema explained that the system is

**BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION (continued)**

built on a standardized accounting code structure and has shifted from management-based to resource-based reporting, which provides more detailed financial insights. While districts typically don't prepare income statements by school site, the system does give them the tools to break down costs by school site, as well as by function code, goal, or resource.

Board Member O'Neill asked whether offering districts certain data and reporting capabilities would come at an additional cost. Deputy Superintendent Bultema clarified that there is no extra cost. The tools and data are already available within the system, and districts can access them based on how they configure their accounts and reports.

Board Member Love congratulated and thanked Executive Director Unni for taking on a challenging role and doing an excellent job. She noted that the County Office does a great deal to improve efficiency for districts and praised the ongoing focus on finding and sharing benefits.

Board Member Arias expressed appreciation that the system launched on July 1 and avoided disruption. She highlighted how the County Office funded the system to support districts and praised the strong servant leadership that ensured cohesive decision-making.

Board Member Gerard acknowledged the challenges in launching such a large system and praised the flawless rollout, which was remarkable. She expressed pride in the extensive work and countless hours put in, emphasizing appreciation for efforts that supported both the county office and all districts, and offered heartfelt thanks to everyone involved.

Board President Torres thanked the team for successfully completing the project and for consistently communicating updates throughout the process, which made the transition smoother. He highlighted the team's dedication and commitment and expressed deep gratitude for the hard work, care, and support for everyone involved.

**8. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. Receive Information on Updated Superintendent Policies**

Marco Chávez, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division, provided information on updated superintendent policies.

Board Member Bonini thanked Deputy Superintendent Chávez for providing important context, noting that the explanation was valuable and much appreciated.

Board Member Love asked how progress on various items in the Exhibit would be assessed and whether a system or metrics were in place. Deputy Superintendent Chávez said yes, explaining that the Human Resources team is closely involved, and Tami Moore, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources, introduced the information that will be used in the processes for onboarding.

**B. Superintendent's Comments**

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)**

Deputy Superintendent Chávez described the Environmental Youth Leadership Summit held on November 15, with over 100 youth attending to build environmental literacy and advocacy. It was hosted along with Peninsula Clean Energy and Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action, and special thanks were given to Julie Hilborn, Director, Environmental Literacy and Sustainability, Office of the Superintendent, and her team for organizing the event.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez reported on the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Meeting held on November 5, noting strong collaboration between the County Office, educators, industry leaders, and partners to strengthen student career pathways. He congratulated Marcela Miranda, Executive Director, College, Career, and Community Partnerships, Educational Services Division, and her team for coordinating the well-attended event.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez discussed Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, including the rallies held in South San Francisco and East Palo Alto. The events honored Ruby Bridges' role in the civil rights movement, emphasized the importance of safe routes to school, and was especially meaningful since the tradition began in San Mateo County with local fifth graders. He then shared a short video with highlights from the East Palo Alto rally.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez informed on November 18, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation designating November 14, 2025, as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day countywide. He gave special thanks to Theresa Vallez-Kelly, Coordinator, Safe Routes to School, Educational Services Division, who has supported the event since its start in 2018 and helped it grow into a national movement.

Board President Torres expressed deep gratitude to Deputy Superintendent Chávez for addressing concerns about potential Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids before the event. Deputy Superintendent Chávez provided reassurance that safety measures and support were in place, ensuring the event remained safe, welcoming, and free from trauma, allowing everyone to participate fully.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez wished happy upcoming birthdays to Deputy Superintendent Bultema on December 6 and Board Member Arias on December 10.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez wished a Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

**8. BOARD MEMBERS**

**A. Second Reading and Action on the New Board Policy Regarding Student Board Members**

Marco Chávez, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division, provided information on the second reading of the new board policy regarding student board members.

There were no questions from the Board.

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Love, the new board policy regarding student board members was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

B. Review Investment Policy (Board Policy 3430)

Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, provided background information on the Investment Policy (Board Policy 3430).

Board Member O'Neill asked why the districts' only investment option is the San Mateo County investment pool rather than other investment options. Deputy Superintendent Bultema explained that the choice is primarily for security reasons. The county treasury specializes in managing government funds, and the priority is to safeguard and maintain the principal rather than pursue higher returns. As a result, there is no recommendation to move the funds, since the current arrangement best supports the objective of protecting the districts' financial resources.

Board Member Alvaro reflected on past requirements that mandated funds be kept in the county treasury, leaving no choice for investment alternatives. Deputy Superintendent Bultema noted that while those rules have since changed, moving money now involves multiple steps and must comply with strict investment ratings for public funds. Although provisions exist to allow funds to be placed elsewhere, the process is complex.

C. Discuss/Act on the Formation of an Ad Hoc Board Governance Work Group Subcommittee

Deputy Superintendent Chávez provided information on the formation of an Ad Hoc Board Governance Work Group Subcommittee.

Board President Torres shared that at the end of the Governance Workshop, he suggested forming this subcommittee consisting of himself, Board Member Gerard, and Board Member Love. He and Board Member Gerard had been instrumental in advancing the governance and retreat work and wished to continue collaborating, and Board Member Love was recommended to join in order to contribute valuable perspective from her experience at the County Office.

Board Member Bonini clarified that it is within the Board President's authority to make appointments. Although she agreed with the suggested plan, she emphasized the importance of ensuring that this authority was clear and that the process remained open and transparent.

After a motion by Board Member Bonini and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the formation of an Ad Hoc Board Governance Work Group Subcommittee comprised of Board Member Gerard, Board Member Love, and Board President Torres was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

D. Communication of the Board's Organizational Meeting Date and Time

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Deputy Superintendent Chávez provided information on the Board's Organizational Meeting date and time, which will take place on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

E. Adopt Resolution No. 25-64 Implementing Board Policy 9250 to Compensate Edith Arias for Her Absence from the October 22, 2025, Board Meeting Due to Hardship

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Alvaro, Resolution No. 25-64 Implementing Board Policy 9250 to Compensate Edith Arias for Her Absence

from the October 22, 2025, Board Meeting Due to Hardship, was approved by a vote of six in favor (Alvaro, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) and one recusal (Arias).

F. Adopt Resolution No. 25-65 Implementing Board Policy 9250 to Compensate Susan Alvaro for Her Absence from the November 5, 2025, Board Meeting Due to Illness

After a motion by Board Member Love and a second by Board Member Gerard, Resolution No. 25-65 Implementing Board Policy 9250 to Compensate Susan Alvaro for Her Absence from the November 5, 2025, Board Meeting Due to Illness, was approved by a vote of six in favor (Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) and one recusal (Alvaro).

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

Board Member Love provided an update on the Board/Superintendent Advocacy Subcommittee, noting that information had been shared with Senator Becker's office. Instead of recommending one of the items in the report, the Subcommittee suggested pursuing legislation to study the options further, as more data is needed before decisions can be made. A meeting with the Senator is scheduled for December 1 to discuss the matter and efforts are underway to coordinate with other counties, particularly Santa Clara County, which is interested in forming its own task force. The Subcommittee also plans to give another update to ACCBE on the initiative.

Board Member Love reported that the County Committee on School District Organization recently met and voted on a slate, including one contested election. She observed that the group had not met all year and questioned whether they ever proactively review long-term issues such as school district boundaries or demographic trends. The response was that the committee functions only as a reactive body, which Board Member Love expressed to be a missed opportunity since members could engage in brainstorming and forward-looking discussions.

Board Member Bonini noted that the Gateway Subcommittee convened meetings on November 12, 13, and 18 after becoming aware of information relevant to its work. She informed that the Subcommittee was established to prioritize serving Gateway students, involve high school and unified districts in discussions about potential program changes, and ensure Board and community stakeholder engagement. While a final report will eventually be submitted, the committee is not yet at that stage.

## **BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Board Member Bonini shared that during discussions in the Workforce Housing Subcommittee, questions arose about a Facilities Master Plan. The Subcommittee was surprised to learn of this plan, as facilities fall under the purview of the Board, County Office, and Superintendent, and requested more information. The Subcommittee learned that additional information about Gateway would be shared at an ACCBE meeting.

Board Member Gerard informed that at the ACCBE meeting, it was revealed that the County Office was closing its Community School and opening a middle college. She was surprised, having no knowledge of such plans, and immediately sought clarification. It was confirmed that Gateway is not closing and no middle college is being opened at this time. However, the incorrect information was presented publicly using the County Office logo, which caused concern. To comply with the Brown Act, the matter was formally brought to the board meeting to ensure all members were aware that the information was inaccurate.

Board Member Bonini emphasized returning to the Subcommittee's purpose, noting concern that the facilities master plan meetings and Gateway discussions had occurred without the Subcommittee's awareness. She requested that the Board receive information on these matters soon and that the Subcommittee be included in any related discussions, whether formal or informal. Both issues came as unexpected surprises, raising alignment concerns. She stressed the importance of transparency and keeping the Board informed. Deputy Superintendent Chávez assured that there would be an agenda item on the Facilities Master Plan on December 15.

### **H. Suggested Topics for Future Board Agendas**

Board Member Bonini requested that an agenda item be scheduled to provide clearer context on the timing and rollout of the student board member process. She also suggested considering whether a liaison from the Youth Commission could still be included moving forward.

Board Member Love also asked about the status of appointing a liaison, noting that typically one would already be seated with the Board. Board Member Bonini clarified that the process had been paused while the policy was being approved, and the request now is for a timeline on when engagement can resume. Deputy Superintendent Chávez informed that the next step was to develop a clear timeline for communication and implementation. This includes informing Gateway students as well as the Youth Commission, while also outlining the process for Board engagement. Board Member Bonini clarified that the communication plan should encompass all Court and Community Students.

### **I. Board Member Comments**

#### **Board Member Alvaro**

Board Member Alvaro congratulated Ms. Ton for her contributions and rapid promotion, and recognized her strong presence in the community, attending events and consistently showing dedication, making her an invaluable asset to the team.

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Board Member Alvaro reported on her visit to the La Honda-Pescadero School District, where Superintendent Michelle Ross engaged in discussions with county design consultants, CAL FIRE representatives, and district leaders. The focus was on the development of a new CAL FIRE station which will be located on the school district's property and will include essential upgrades such as emergency generators and fire-resistant landscaping.

Board Member Alvaro shared about her visit to the Early Childhood Education programs, Gateway, and Hillcrest. At Gateway, students had created a traditional Day of the Dead remembrance altar, honoring family members and a recently deceased classmate, which was a meaningful and moving experience. At Hillcrest, a new mural was unveiled and was described as an impressive and inspiring addition to the school environment.

**Board Member Arias**

Board Member Arias expressed appreciation for being part of the Board and highlighted the support received from Deputy Superintendent Chávez and fellow board members during a family emergency on October 22. She emphasized how personal lives often intersect with professional commitments, and in those moments, the support of colleagues is invaluable.

Board Member Arias discussed how the November 5 Governance Workshop provided an energizing opportunity to discuss future possibilities and strengthen unity among board members, the Superintendent, and the broader team. She reflected on the importance of servant leadership, noting that retreats and discussions outside of regular board meetings are essential for building cohesion and advancing shared goals.

Board Member Arias noted that the November 14 San Mateo County School Boards Association (SMCSBA) happy hour was a valuable opportunity to connect with school board members across the county. The event fostered meaningful conversations about advocacy and issues beyond formal agendas. She encouraged colleagues to attend future gatherings, emphasizing that such social opportunities serve as platforms for deeper discussions about education and governance.

Board Member Arias shared that on November 17 she attended the Court and Community Schools deep dive with the Youth Advisory Board Panel. She stressed the importance of engaging students directly, not only through visits but by inviting them to participate in panels. Board Member Arias urged the Board to incorporate student voices into decision-making, recognizing that students' needs extend beyond academics to mentorship and life challenges. She concluded with gratitude for the presentation, pride in the board's representation, and eagerness for continued opportunities to hear from students.

**Board Member Bonini**

Board Member Bonini informed that she visited Gateway and Hillcrest on October 27 and again later that week. Both visits were positive, meaningful, and enjoyable, with many opportunities to hear directly from students.

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Board Member Bonini described attending the ACCBE deep dive sessions two and three in recent weeks. These meetings were highly informative and impactful, particularly because of the chance to hear directly from students.

Board Member Bonini acknowledged the committee organizing events for SMCSBA, noting the recent gathering and the rescheduled meeting set for December 8 at 6:30 p.m. which will include a legislative update from the California School Boards Association (CSBA).

Board Member Bonini shared that at the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Leadership Breakfast, one segment focused on the United for Youth grants, with a notable emphasis on educator wellness. This theme was reinforced by a California Department of Education webinar on November 13, which centered entirely on caring for educators.

Board Member Bonini said at the ACCBE deep dive number three, students raised the importance of supporting teachers and staff. She noted this recurring theme across events and stressed the importance of not only acknowledging it but acting on it to ensure educators are supported and retained.

**Board Member Love**

Board Member Love expressed appreciation for Ms. Ton's recognition, praising her as a highly committed, positive, and productive staff member.

Board Member Love highlighted ACCBE's deep dive program on Court and Community Schools, valuing the perspectives of former students and raising the question of whether students could serve on interview panels for teachers and administrators. She also attended an ACCBE program on the Brown Act, which was useful for both new and experienced board members.

Board Member Love reported on her participation in the AI work group in Sacramento, which focused more on how the California Department of Education could support districts rather than on visionary transformation of education, although she still found it worthwhile.

Board Member Love commended SMCSBA for its strong work this year, noting the advocacy subcommittee, dinner meetings, happy hours, and lunches as signs of progress.

Board Member Love described attending a 2+ 2 meeting in San Carlos between the City Council and the School Board, finding it useful but observing that the city's development plans for recreation did not involve the school district, despite overlapping interests in land use and community service.

**Board Member O'Neill**

Board Member O'Neill noted that he attended the San Mateo County Veterans Lunch, where he met the county's oldest veteran, a 102-year-old who served in Okinawa during World War II, and whose son-in-law was present during the Gulf of Tonkin incident that sparked the Vietnam War. As a history enthusiast, he found this encounter especially meaningful.

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Board Member O'Neill shared that he participated in the countywide CTE Advisory Meeting and attends monthly CTE sessions via Zoom. Additionally, he joined the Jefferson Union High School District's first CTE Advisory Meeting, which provided insight into challenges and requests at the district level, and noted positive collaboration between district and county representatives.

Board Member O'Neill highlighted his attendance at the Farm Bureau dinner, where all food was locally produced in San Mateo County, underscoring the strength of the county's \$100 million agricultural and fishing industry. He described the opportunity for an agricultural distribution center with robotics, which could potentially be integrated into educational curriculum.

Board Member O'Neill said he attended a meeting with the head of the Buildings and Trades Council, with discussions focused on union activities and challenges in San Mateo County.

Board Member O'Neill shared that one of the CTE curriculums at the Jefferson Union High School District is a student-run newspaper, which recently produced a 20-page edition. The front page featured a story about students attending the Outdoor Education program and reminiscing about their experiences, showcasing the program's creativity and relevance. The newspaper also noted that with the new firehouse in Pescadero, Pescadero High School will now be connected to running water, which means students will have direct access to safe drinking water on campus.

**Board Member Gerard**

Board Member Gerard reflected positively on the November 5 Governance Workshop, praising the facilitators for leading thought-provoking discussions that strengthened communication and helped the board function more effectively. She emphasized the value of retreats in opening dialogue and building cohesion.

Board Member Gerard shared on October 27 she toured Gateway and Hillcrest, noting the impressive new mural at Hillcrest and describing it as breathtaking and perfectly placed for visibility across campus. At Gateway, she engaged with students who expressed interest in apprenticeship programs to learn trades and earn money after school.

Board Member Gerard discussed the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Leadership Breakfast's focus on electric bicycles and motorbikes. The presentation revealed that many middle school students were riding motorbikes, which legally require a driver's license, insurance, and registration. She found this concerning, noting that many parents may not realize the difference between electric bicycles and motorbikes capable of reaching 60 miles per hour.

Board Member Gerard described her participation in ACCBE, including attending the Brown Act presentation, which was excellent and informative. She also praised the deep dive sessions on Court and Community Schools, emphasizing the importance of student panels to share their perspectives directly with the Board. A key takeaway was the importance students place on mentorship and consistent relationships with teachers. Last year's frequent teacher rotations disrupted continuity, and students stressed the need for stability to feel supported.

**BOARD MEMBERS (continued)**

Board Member Gerard expressed appreciation for Ms. Ton, whose positivity and engagement are always appreciated.

**Board President Torres**

Board President Torres discussed attending the Coalition of Safe Schools and Communities Leadership Breakfast, where the discussion on e-bikes and e-motorcycles was noteworthy, and he praised the important work being done by local organizations.

Board President Torres reported that later that same day, he visited several school sites. At the Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families, he enjoyed engaging with the children. At Gateway, the students remembered him from the previous year and felt comfortable sharing their work. At Hillcrest, he admired the beautiful mural symbolizing culture, hope, and community, and observed a new teacher who demonstrated excellent classroom management and rapport with students.

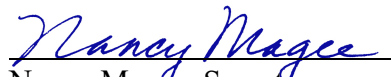
Board President Torres expressed gratitude for the Governance Workshop, thanking the facilitators and organizers for their efforts in creating a productive and supportive environment.

Board President Torres shared that he facilitated a panel of superintendents during the Chamber Leadership Program's Workforce Education Day, which was a meaningful and engaging conversation.

Board President Torres noted he participated in the Environmental Youth Leadership Summit, where he joined a panel and was impressed by the students' enthusiasm. The event was well organized and he was delighted to reconnect with two former students now preparing for college, making the experience especially rewarding.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m. Board President Torres announced the next meeting would be the special meeting on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

  
Nancy Magee, Secretary  
jlp