

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: February 18, 2026

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

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

County Attorney Present: Lisa Cho, Deputy County Attorney

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, Marchelle Moten,
Jae Takahashi, Mary Yung

1. **OPENING ITEMS**

A. Call to Order

Board President Hugo Torres called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Approval of Agenda

After a motion by Board Member O’Neill and a second by Board Member Gerard, the February 18, 2026, agenda as presented was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O’Neill, and Torres) approved.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no persons wishing to address the Board

3. **EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

- A. February 2026 Employee of the Month Bert Ornelas, Custodial Maintenance Worker, Facilities, Business Services Division

Board President Torres recognized the February 2026 Employee of the Month Bert Ornelas, Custodial Maintenance Worker, Facilities, Business Services Division, and honored him on behalf of the Board.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. January 31, 2026, Special Board Meeting Governance Workshop

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member O'Neill, the Minutes of the January 31, 2026, Special Board Meeting Governance Workshop were unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

- B. February 4, 2026, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Board Member Alvaro and a second by Board Member Gerard, the Minutes of the February 4, 2026, Regular Board Meeting were unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- B. Receive Staffing Reports
C. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 26-10 Recognizing March 2, 2026, as Read Across America Day
D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 26-11 Recognizing March 2026 as Arts Education Month/Youth Art Month
E. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 26-12 Recognizing March 2026 as National Women's History Month
F. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 26-13 Recognizing March 2026 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

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

6. **OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

- A. Discuss/Act on Adoption of the County Board's Authority to Fill the County Superintendent's Office by Appointment (Ed. Code §1042(e)(2))

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

Lisa Cho, Deputy County Attorney, provided information regarding the process for the County Board to adopt authority under Education Code §1042(e)(2) to fill the County Superintendent's Office by appointment.

After a motion by Board Member Love and a second by Board Member Arias, adopting authority under Education Code §1042(e)(2) to fill the County Superintendent's Office by appointment was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

B. Discuss/Act on the Appointment of the County Superintendent of Schools for the Remainder of the Current 2022-2026 Term

Lisa Cho, Deputy County Attorney, provided information regarding the process for the County Board to fill the County Superintendent's Office by appointment.

Board Member Love emphasized how fortunate she felt to have Deputy Superintendent Chávez prepared and ready to take on the role, and expressed her appreciation and gratitude.

Board Member Alvaro asked whether Deputy Superintendent Chávez had been asked about taking on the role, and Board President Torres confirmed that he had been asked.

Board President Torres expressed deep gratitude for Deputy Superintendent Chávez' exceptional support, leadership, and efforts to keep the work moving forward.

Board Member Arias thanked Deputy Superintendent Chávez for the support he provided as a new trustee and shared she was looking forward to ongoing guidance.

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Love, the appointment of Marco Chávez to County Superintendent of Schools for the 2022-2026 term was unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O'Neill, and Torres) approved.

Board President Torres then administered the Oath of Office to County Superintendent of Schools Marco Chávez upon his appointment for the 2022-2026 term.

C. Receive 2024-2025 Personnel Commission Annual Report

Randy Perez, Executive Director, Personnel Commission Services, presented the 2024-2025 Personnel Commission Annual Report.

Board Member Love expressed appreciation for presentations, such as this one, that are tied to the Strategic Plan. She also commended the strong, collaborative efforts between the Personnel Commission and Human Resources to better support staff and students.

Board Member Alvaro thanked the Personnel Commissioners and expressed support for the closer collaboration with Human Resources. She asked whether long hiring delays had been resolved. Executive Director Perez explained that new standards and accountability, along with

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

approval of the Classification and Compensation Study, have significantly improved recruitment and filled previously hard-to-staff positions.

Board Member Arias emphasized how critical it is to keep special education positions filled in order for students to receive required services and to keep the County Office in compliance. She highlighted the importance of creating career pathways for paraeducators and ensuring that all hires are highly qualified, noting how essential this work is in supporting students and families.

Board President Torres thanked Executive Director Perez for clearly connecting the work to the Strategic Plan, noting that the explanations were helpful both as a refresher and for new board members.

D. Receive Information on Superintendent Policy 1445: Response to Immigration Enforcement

Superintendent Chávez provided information on Superintendent Policy 1445: Response to Immigration Enforcement.

There were no questions from the Board.

E. Public Hearing on the Initial Proposal from the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 to the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools for the 2025-2026 Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

Board President Torres opened the public hearing on the initial proposal from the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 to the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools for the 2025-2026 Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement. Receiving no public comment, Board President Torres declared the public hearing closed.

F. Public Hearing on the Initial Proposal from the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools to the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 for the 2025-2026 Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

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G. Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Chávez expressed deep gratitude for the appointment, noting that he felt honored and takes the responsibility seriously. He emphasized his commitment to advocating for the county's students and families, especially those with the greatest needs, while leading with heart and supporting staff, colleagues, and community partners. He said he looks forward to working with everyone.

7. **BOARD MEMBERS**

A. Receive Update on the BoardDocs Transition Process and Choosing a New Agenda Posting Platform

Superintendent Chávez provided an update on the BoardDocs transition process and choosing a new agenda posting platform.

Board Member Love noted that the choice seems straightforward. She asked about annual costs. Superintendent Chávez indicated there was no significant difference between the set-up cost and the annual fee.

Board Member Love asked whether other districts could join the contract to secure better pricing. Superintendent Chávez explained that the current quote applied only to the County Office's governance bodies.

Board Member Love discussed how the pricing for Diligent Community was favorable. Superintendent Chávez noted that the quote may have changed slightly and needed to be updated.

Board Member Love highlighted how Diligent Community includes a strong AI component that should improve minute-taking and accuracy.

Board Member O'Neill noted that Diligent Community appears to be the stronger choice. He expressed support for choosing the option preferred by staff since they will use it daily, and agreed that exploring possible discounts if other districts join was a good idea.

Board Member Bonini asked whether the other reviewed platforms were similar to Gamut. Superintendent Chávez described how all of the platforms were different and not all met the priority requirements.

Board Member Bonini noted that transitioning to Diligent Community should be fairly seamless since it is the updated version of BoardDocs. She asked about the timeline for moving over before BoardDocs goes offline. Superintendent Chávez explained that BoardDocs set an April deadline with an optional extension and Diligent Community is prepared to transition us quickly.

Board Member Bonini asked about the price difference between the old and new platforms. Superintendent Chávez shared the price is going up and he would email the exact costs to the Board.

Board Member Alvaro shared her frustrations with the GAMUT Simbli system based on technical issues and poor reliability. She emphasized the importance of a platform that is easy for the public to navigate. She also underscored that staff rely on the system more frequently than board members, so choosing the option that makes staff workflows smoother and more efficient is the priority and earns her full support.

Board Member Arias asked about accessibility features for the public, such as language access. Superintendent Chávez confirmed that accessibility was a priority for the team and both Diligent Community and GAMUT include the necessary public-facing accessibility tools.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Gerard thanked staff for the extensive research and effort put into selecting a new system, emphasizing how essential it is to choose a platform that is easy for everyone to use. She discussed how the GAMUT platforms have been frustrating to use in the past.

Board Member O’Neill asked about federal accessibility requirements for people with physical disabilities. Superintendent Chávez confirmed that both Diligent Community and GAMUT comply with those standards, including features that allow navigation without a mouse.

B. First Reading of Updated Board Policy 0450: Comprehensive Safety Plan

Superintendent Chávez provided information on the first reading of updated Board Policy 0450: Comprehensive Safety Plan.

There were no questions from the Board.

C. Cast 2026 Ballot for the California School Boards Association (CSBA) Delegate Assembly

Board Member Bonini noted that the filing deadline for incumbents had passed, and while one incumbent successfully submitted paperwork, another did not. She proposed that the Board include Mary Beth Alexander from the Cabrillo Unified School District, the current incumbent, as a third candidate.

After a motion by Board Member Gerard and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Arias, Bonini, Gerard, Love, O’Neill, and Torres) voted to approve three candidates – Chelsea Bonini, Mary Beth Alexander, and Teri Chavez – for the CSBA Delegate Assembly.

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

Board Member Alvaro reported that the YMCA Partnership Subcommittee met and approved the latest invoice for previously authorized work and outlined upcoming steps. At the board meeting on March 18, YMCA staff will present detailed plans, costs, and visuals for new housing builds, followed by Board discussion and potential project approval. In April, the Board will review proposed maintenance addendums to the existing 25-year lease, covering upkeep for new and renovated buildings, without reopening the full lease. She added that that funds from the Loma Mar property sale have been separated within Fund 40 and despite over \$1 million already spent on improvements, interest earnings have kept the balance close to \$5 million, which remains available for future Jones Gulch capital projects.

Board Member Bonini asked for clarification that the amount being carved out of Fund 40 was approximately \$5 million. Board Member Alvaro confirmed that was accurate.

Board Member Bonini asked for confirmation about whether the Board had previously approved funding for additional housing. Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, clarified that the Board had approved \$4.5 million in capital improvements for Camp Jones Gulch,

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

and the Subcommittee had signed off on the remaining projects tied to that amount. He explained that the current discussion concerns administrative housing, which is a separate matter.

Board Member Love reported on the work of the Board Policy Subcommittee, thanking the Subcommittee and staff for moving quickly to meet the March 1 deadline, a timeline that had caused some concern. She noted that the structured approach provided by Deputy County Attorney Cho, who identified focused sets of policies to tackle, was helpful given the overwhelming volume of required updates. She expressed hope that this rhythm could continue, perhaps on a six-month cycle, so the Board can stay current without long gaps in progress.

Board Member Bonini shared that she was glad to rejoin the Board Policy Subcommittee and appreciated having a focused set of policies to review. She noted that she had previously requested a few items to be added as future agenda topics, which may involve additional policy development or review. These items should be added to the Subcommittee's list for review, even though it is unclear whether they will fall under board policies, superintendent policies, or parallel policies.

Board Member Love explained that the Board/Superintendent Advocacy Subcommittee met to map out priorities for the coming year, although one member was absent. Their discussion focused on several key areas, including the Vehicle License Fee issue. She discussed creating a toolkit to help board members engage with school districts and advocate effectively in their communities, an idea that emerged from the Governance Workshop. The Subcommittee also discussed special education, particularly federal funding concerns, along with a few other issues.

Board Member O'Neill added that the Subcommittee discussed potential Vehicle License Fee cuts from the county and thanked staff for providing details on which county-provided funds support County Office programs. This information will help the Board decide whether to advocate locally if cuts move forward, for example with programs like The Big Lift and United for Youth. Superintendent Chávez noted he would be attending a meeting the following morning to gather more insight on strategies for addressing the funding shortfall and would report back to the Board via email.

Board Member Love shared that she and Board President Torres attended the county's meeting on this topic. She emphasized that while the county seeks support in restoring its lost state funding, the County Office also faces significant losses and would welcome support in recovering those funds. Board President Torres added that a summary sheet of information was distributed at that meeting and had been sent to the full Board.

Board Member Alvaro highlighted that one area of particular concern was child and adult literacy programs offered through local libraries. She emphasized that these programs are deeply connected to student success, since many adults served by library literacy efforts are parents or caregivers of the students in local schools. Strengthening adult literacy directly supports children in avoiding long-term English Learner status. While acknowledging that the Board cannot advocate for every program at risk, she stressed that library-based literacy initiatives are especially critical to the County Office's mission and should be prioritized in advocacy efforts.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Love explained that the Board became involved because the county's initial proposal targeted excess property tax revenues from school districts, which alarmed the districts that were consulted. The county suggested districts wouldn't be harmed because the state would backfill the lost revenue, but district leaders made it clear that such backfilling was not consistent. In effect, the county was shifting its own funding problem onto schools. After hearing strong objections from superintendents, and reviewing a detailed list of concerns, the Subcommittee is focusing its efforts on supporting districts in protecting their funding.

Board Member Bonini reflected on the county's initial proposal and noted that it would affect the County Office's own excess property tax revenues, which is the community-funded portion that has no state backfill.

E. Suggested Topics for Future Board Agendas

Board President Torres explained that he, Board Member Gerard, and Superintendent Chávez met to review the list of topics raised so far. The plan is to use the next meeting to decide which items should be prioritized for action. Any requests coming from subcommittees will automatically be brought forward and board members were invited to identify any additional topics to add to the list before the Board votes on priorities at the upcoming meeting.

Board Member Bonini reiterated three previously raised items. First, she discussed the request for an update on the cell phone policy, which is required by July and needs clarity on what actions will be taken. Second, she highlighted the need to establish the process for selecting a student board member/liaison, noting that students outside of existing programs are expressing interest and need guidance on how to apply. She suggested the update should also address how the opportunity will be communicated publicly. Third, she revisited the request for initiating a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) recruitment for the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), explaining that she and Board Member Arias, as SELPA liaisons, want to move forward with a process that will allow the Board to make appointments.

Board Member Love requested an update on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including an overview of the main goals, progress made so far, and any areas where the Board might need to step in to help move things forward.

Board Member Arias made three requests. First, she asked that the potential Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJJPC) presentation include youth voices. Second, she requested an update on United for Youth to show where the initiative currently stands. Third, she asked for a presentation on Court and Community Schools family and student engagement, emphasizing the importance of understanding how services are being experienced by those receiving them.

Board President Torres requested a presentation from the Department of Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion. He explained that at a recent public event, they provided information about the important work they are doing with immigration-related support, including responses to Immigration and

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Customs Enforcement (ICE) in schools. He suggested it would be valuable to receive an update on their current projects and partnerships.

Board President Torres reiterated that prioritizing the lengthy list topics at the next meeting will help ensure the workload stays manageable for staff.

F. Board Member Comments

Board Member Alvaro

Board Member Alvaro described ongoing concerns about state and county funding, noting that the Governor is underfunding Proposition 98 by billions of dollars and education dollars continue to be diverted to other areas, with promised backfills rarely materializing. She connected this to the earlier discussion about Vehicle License Fee cuts and emphasized that statewide organizations are actively working on the issue.

Board Member Alvaro offered heartfelt appreciation to Superintendent Chávez, praising his leadership and steadiness, and the compassion he brings to the role. She expressed gratitude for his willingness to step in as Superintendent.

Board Member Alvaro spoke about the growing safety concerns around e-bikes and e-motos, sharing the recent death of a local 16-year-old as an example of the urgency. She noted that some school districts and county supervisors are already taking action and stressed that the education community needs to stay engaged, since the issue directly affects students.

Board Member Arias

Board Member Arias congratulated Superintendent Chávez, noting the meaningful moment of watching him be sworn in after he had sworn her in as a board member.

Board Member Arias described attending the Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties event, expressing gratitude to the organizers and highlighting how powerful it was to see students engaged in learning about civil rights, history, and the legal system. At the event, she engaged in a small-group conversation with six Pescadero high school students, three of whom had not yet spoken with a counselor about post-graduation plans. Their uncertainty and the barriers they described underscored the importance of elevating student voice and ensuring students receive the support they need.

Board Member Arias reported attending the third quarterly meeting of the San Mateo County School Boards Association (SMCSBA).

Board Member Arias noted that she met with a South San Francisco Unified School District trustee, and has plans to meet with their Superintendent and Board President to introduce herself and offer support from the county.

Board Member Bonini

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Bonini congratulated Superintendent Chávez, expressing appreciation for his openness, communication, and leadership, and noting how fortunate the organization is to have him in the role.

Board Member Bonini shared updates related to SMCSBA, including highlights from the third quarterly meeting's presentation on middle-school literacy efforts. She reminded that the fourth quarterly meeting will take place on April 20 with a presentation from Seeds to Solutions. The February 28 legislative brunch had to be canceled due to low legislator availability, and the group is instead inviting legislators to join the final quarterly meeting and the Kent Awards.

Board Member Bonini described her involvement with the California School Boards Association (CSBA), including serving on the Annual Conference planning committee and participating in planning for the County Board Conference.

Board Member Bonini discussed attending the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) "Who's Who in State Education" event, where she learned about the Breaking Barriers Integrated Care Symposium.

Board Member Bonini echoed earlier comments about e-bike and e-moto safety, noting that the issue was discussed at the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Leadership Breakfast. She emphasized the importance of continued attention across multiple community spaces.

Board Member Love

Board Member Love congratulated Superintendent Chávez and acknowledging that his appointment comes during a significant period of transition for the County Office. She emphasized that transitions can be challenging for staff and noted the Board was available to provide support.

Board Member Love noted that the San Carlos School District had explored placing a parcel tax on the June ballot but, after polling showed insufficient support, decided not to proceed at this time. However, they may revisit the idea in November. This serves as a reminder that many districts, especially those funded by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), continue to struggle financially and may need support.

Board Member O'Neill

Board Member O'Neill joined others in congratulating Superintendent Chávez and expressed that he looks forward to working together during the coming months.

Board Member Gerard

Board Member Gerard congratulated Superintendent Chávez, sharing that she has worked with him for many years and has especially valued the heart and steady leadership he brings to his work. She noted that she and Board President Torres have met with him frequently in recent months and they appreciate the strong communication and collaboration that has developed. She underscored that the Board is ready to support him through the transition.

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board Member Gerard spoke about e-bike and motor-scooter safety, describing how parents unknowingly purchase motor scooters, capable of very high speeds, for their middle-school children, believing they are buying e-bikes. She highlighted the dangers for students, pedestrians, and drivers, and strongly supported broader education and awareness across school districts.

Board Member Gerard shared that she will be attending the upcoming ACCBE conference in Modesto, where Native American student issues will be a major focus. She will also be participating in the 17th District PTA Founders Day Luncheon and the Chamber San Mateo County Annual Awards and Recognition Luncheon, both of which will recognize Superintendent Magee.

Board President Torres

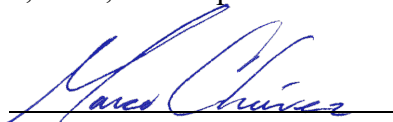
Board President Torres offered congratulations to Deputy Superintendent Bultema on his anniversary.

Board President Torres congratulated Superintendent Chávez, adding a warm note of appreciation for his patience and offering early birthday wishes.

Board President Torres shared that he had stepped down from his principal position and begun a new role as Vice President of Programs and Services at Samaritan House. Before accepting the position, he confirmed that the role does not create any conflict of interest with his board service, and committed to abstaining from any future votes where a conflict might arise. He explained that onboarding in the new job had temporarily limited his availability for subcommittee responsibilities, but he expected his schedule to stabilize within the next couple of weeks so he can fully resume his commitments.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m. Board President Torres announced the next regular meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.



Marco Chávez, Secretary

jlp