MINUTES
MERCED COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 17, 2026

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Merced County Office of Education Board Room
632 W. 13th Street, Merced, CA 95341

I. Opening

A. Board Chairperson, Geneva Brett, called the regular meeting of the Merced County Board of Education to order at 3:00 PM.

B. Members present were Geneva Brett, Dennis Hanks, Ryan Heller, Rodrigo Espinosa, and Frank Fagundes

C. Others present: Laura Fong, Rosa Barragan, Laura Andrews, Stacy Shasky, Nathan Quevedo, Kristen Concepcion, Erika Davalos-Lemus, Israel Salgado, Jazz Diaz-Sham, Ana Linares-Hernandez, Kelli Sharpe, Darin Dupont, Christina Vara, Tara Hill, Maria Cuevas, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Steve M. Tietjen, County Superintendent

D. Chairperson, Geneva Brett, asked that everyone present introduce themselves.

II. Flag Salute – Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

III. Consent Agenda: Items listed under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine administrative functions and will be acted on by the Board in one motion and one vote. Any items under the Consent Agenda may be discussed; however, if the item needs further clarification and discussion, it may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of the Board or the Superintendent and considered separately. Information concerning Consent Agenda items will be provided to each Board member for study before the meeting. It is understood that the Superintendent recommends approval of all consent items unless otherwise noted. *(Board Bylaw 9322)*

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting on January 30, 2026
B. Resolution No. 2026-02 Recognizing March 2026 as Arts Education Month

Frank Fagundes moved, and **Dennis Hanks** seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. The motion carried with a vote of 5-0

IV. Written Communications

A. Correspondence Received By Chairperson: None.
B. Correspondence Received By Board Member: Form 700-State of Economic Interest
C. Correspondence Received By Superintendent: None.

V. Call for Public Comments on Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

The public was invited to address agenda items, submit items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board for future consideration, or speak to issues related to the function and operation of the County Board of Education.

There were comments from multiple parents regarding the Dual Language Academy situation.

VI. Superintendent's and Board Members' Report (Information/Discussion Only)

A. Mark Dieu, CPA Manager, reported on the Independent Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025, by EideBailly

B. Laura Andrews, Assistant Superintendent, and Tara Hill, Director of Educational Services, presented the 2025/2026 Mid-Year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Budget overview for the schools operated by the Merced County Office of Education, the Budget Overview for Merced Scholars Charter School, and the Budget overview for Come Back Charter School.

C. Board Member's Report - None

D. Superintendent's Report: In Dr. Steve M. Tietjen's absence, Laura Fong reported

1. 2025 Merced County Schools Annual Education Report
   Annual Education Report took place on February 4, 2026
2. MCSBA Spring Dinner – March 30, 2026 @ Hilmar. School TBD.

VII. Business Items for Action

Board member Frank Fagundes excused himself early and left the meeting at 3:38 pm

A. Quality Uniform Complaint Report

Erika Davalos-Lemus presented the report. No complaints were reported.
It was recommended that the Board of Education review and approve the Uniform Complaint Report Summary for the Quarter of October 2025 through December 2025.

Rodrigo Espinosa moved, and **Dennis Hanks** seconded a motion to approve the Uniform Complaint Report Summary for the quarter period October 2025 through December 2025. The motion was carried with a vote of 4-0 *(Fagundes was absent)*.

B. Holiday Schedule for 2026-2027

It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the 2026-2027 Holiday Schedule.

Dennis Hanks moved, and **Rodrigo Espinosa** seconded a motion to approve the 2026-2027 Holiday Schedule. The motion carried with a vote of 4-0 *(Fagundes was absent)*.

C. 2026 Ballot for CSBA Delegate Assembly

It was recommended that the Board of Education authorize not to cast a ballot for the 2025 Delegate Assembly for Subregion 8-D (Merced County).

Ryan Heller moved, and **Dennis Hanks** seconded a motion to submit a ballot for the 2026 Delegate Assembly Subregion 8 and vote for Francisco Briones from Delhi Unified School District. The motion was carried with a vote of 4-0 *(Fagundes absent)*.

VIII. Call for Public comments: Identified Closed Session Agenda Items

During this portion of the agenda, the public was invited to address the Board on the identified items before adjournment into a Closed Session. No comments were made.

The Board proceeded into a Closed Session

IX. **Closed Session** Pursuant to Education Code 35146 to Hear Appeal of Denial of Interdistrict Attendance Request – Appeals #2026-02 and #2026-03.

X. **Closed Session** to Deliberate Interdistrict Attendance Appeals #2026-02 and #2026-03

The Board proceeded into an Open Session

XI. **Open session** for the Disposition of Interdistrict Attendance Appeals # 2026-02. On the request for an appeal of the denial of the Interdistrict Attendance Request submitted on behalf of Student #2026-02, it was moved by **Rodrigo Espinosa** and seconded by **Dennis Hanks** to overturn both appeals, for the 2026-2027 school year, Merced Union High School District decision of denying the request for an interdistrict transfer to attend school at Livingston High School in the Merced Union School District. The motion was carried with a vote of 4-0.

Vote (by roll call)

Brett	YES
Heller	YES
Espinosa	YES
Hanks	YES
Fagundes	ABSENT

XII. **Open session** for the Disposition of Interdistrict Attendance Appeals # 2026-03. On the request for an appeal of the denial of the Interdistrict Attendance Request submitted on behalf of Student #2026-03, it was moved by **Ryan Heller** and seconded by **Rodrigo Espinosa** to overturn both appeals, for the 2026-2027 school year, Merced Union High School District decision of denying the request for an interdistrict transfer to attend school at Livingston High School in the Merced Union School District. The motion was carried with a vote of 4-0.

Vote (by roll call)

Brett	YES
Heller	YES
Espinosa	YES
Hanks	YES
Fagundes	ABSENT

X. **Adjournment**

Ryan Heller moved, and **Dennis Hanks** seconded the motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Merced County Board of Education at 4:36 PM. The motion carried with a vote of 4-0 *(Fagundes was absent)*.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve M. Tietjen, Ed.D.
County Superintendent of Schools
Secretary to the Board of Education

SMT/mc