SANTA MARIA-BONITA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

SMBSD Board Room
708 S. Miller Street
Santa Maria, CA
October 14, 2026

ADOPTED

I. OPENING BUSINESS

A. Call to Order
President Cabral called the Regular Board Meeting of the Santa Maria-Bonita School District to order at 5:14 p.m.

B. Roll Call
Board Members Present:
Luz Maria Cabral, President
John Hollinshead, Board Clerk
Ricardo Valencia, Board Member
Linda Cordero, Board Member
Board Members Absent:
Ricky Lara, Vice President

II. IDENTIFY CLOSED SESSION TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

A. Public Employee Employment/Discipline/Dismissal/Release/Resignation
Government Code § 54957
Agency Representative: Pete Bland, Ed.D.

B. Conference with Labor Negotiators
Government Code § 54957.6
Agency Representative: Pete Bland, Ed.D.
Represented Employees: CSEA

C. Conference with Labor Negotiators
Government Code § 54957.6
Agency Representative: Pete Bland, Ed.D.
Represented Employees: SMEEA
Under negotiation: Price and terms

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - CLOSED SESSION

No public comments were reported for the Closed Session.

IV. MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Board adjourned to Closed Session at 5:16 p.m.

V. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

VI. ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION

VII. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 6:01 p.m.

A. **Report from Closed Session:**
For Items A, B, and C: Information was shared
B. **Introduction of Interpreters:**
Benito Flores-Ramirez, Manuel Rios-Victoria, and Daniel Garcia
C. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
Students from Adam Elementary: Alexa Gaytan Escamilla, Jose Espinoza Vasquez, Emily Sanchez, and Aslinn Mejia
D. **Inspiration:**
Adam Elementary School

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - OPEN SESSION

Non-Agenda Items:

- Amy Martel, a classroom teacher with 29 years of experience, expressed concerns about the increasingly heavy workloads educators are facing due to societal issues affecting students, such as anxiety, depression, and declines in cognitive functioning.She proposed two urgent, actionable steps for the board to take: Staffing support and Addressing vacancies.
- Alfonso Cumel commented that he is a music artist (2023-2026) and a GP politician.
- Dina Asencio, speaking for Ana Rodriguez, commented on workload, salary and health benefits.
- Jennifer Danowitz, a site coach at Miller Elementary School, addressed the board to share that current implementation efforts are overwhelming and unsustainable. She reported that in the first 43 days of the school year, nearly 20 days were impacted by testing windows, alongside numerous professional development sessions, data reviews, and training. She argued that the district is prioritizing completion over impact, noting

that students do not grow simply because educators do more, but rather when they have the time and support to make instruction meaningful. She concluded by asking the board to question whether the current systems are truly sustainable for educators and students.

- Lucy Lyons spoke to the board to share the story of a district employee named Sally and commented on insurance and pay increase.
- Kayla Vaughlin commented on the challenges of teaching in cramped classrooms, safety and the environment. She emphasized that creating an open, safe environment is crucial for student growth and connection, and she invited the board to visit her class to see these conditions firsthand.
- Kyle Borgs commented that his monthly paycheck barely covers his wife's health insurance premiums, which he calculates to be 24.6% of his salary. He expressed that the current pay for teachers is not sustainable and noted that many teachers are leaving the profession due to burnout.
- Katherine Latronica, a teacher in the district for 15 years, commented on her concerns regarding the district's shift to a full inclusion model for special education. She argued against the decision to remove "mild-moderate" special education classes, stating that mandating full inclusion in crowded general education classrooms is not meeting the needs of all students.

Agenda Items:

- Amy Martel commented about the impacts of our current special education inclusion model.
- Addison Sage commented on concerns over compliance with FAPE, and the unfair treatment of outside agency employees.

IX. COMMENTS FROM ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS

- Santa Maria Elementary Education Association (SMEEA)
  SMEEA President Kristen Lohr commented that the administration has repeatedly failed to engage in a true consultation process, noting that "informing is not consulting" and reiterating the association's stance of "no decisions about us without us." She highlighted the district's recent announcement of a "Counselor on Special Assignment" (COSA) position, which was made without consulting the association regarding the bargainable impacts on members' workloads and responsibilities. She reported that SMEEA met with district leadership earlier that day to begin discussing potential bargainable impacts related to the new position, describing it as a positive move toward following proper processes. She urged the board to hold the administration accountable for establishing a consistent and robust consultation process before implementing future programs or positions that affect the bargaining unit.

- California School Employees Association (CSEA)

No comments.

- Administrators In Management Services (AIMS)
  No comments.

X. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS PRESENTED

It was moved by Mr. Hollinshead and seconded by Mr. Valencia to approve the agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote, Ayes: 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

XI. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Dual Language Immersion Update

Presented by Tammie Castillo-Shiffer, Ed.D., Executive Director of Multilingual Services, and Patti DeRobles.

They focused on the district's pathway to expansion. They outlined their progress in building a coherent, equitable, and sustainable program.

The Board of Education **ACKNOWLEDGED THE DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION UPDATE**, as presented.

B. Special Education Inclusion Update

Presented by Armando J. Uribe, Executive Director of Special Education.

He provided an update on the district's inclusive practices. He defined inclusion not merely as physical presence, but as ensuring students with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to participate, learn, and belong alongside their peers.

The Board of Education **ACKNOWLEDGED THE SPECIAL EDUCATION INCLUSION UPDATE**, as presented.

XII. CONSENT ITEMS

A. GENERAL CONSENT

i. Minutes of the Board of Education

B. BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL CONSENT

i. Payment of Warrants

ii. Contracts for Approval or Ratification

iii. Authorization to Declare Obsolete and/or Surplus Equipment or Materials

iv. Authorization to Purchase Cloud-Based Video Surveillance Systems Utilizing a

California Multiple Award Schedule (CMAS) Contract

v. Authorization to Purchase Technology Solutions Products and Services Utilizing a California Multiple Award Schedule (CMAS) Contract

vi. Award of RFP #2627-02 Fresh Produce

C. HUMAN RESOURCES CONSENT

i. Certificated and Classified Personnel Changes

ii. Third Reading of Job Description: Coordinator, Culture and Climate

iii. Third Reading of Job Description: Counselor on Special Assignment

D. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CONSENT

i. Approval for Alvin School Sixth Graders to Attend Overnight Outdoor Science Camp at Rancho Alegre

ii. Quarterly Report on Williams/Valenzuela Uniform Complaints

It was moved by Mr. Valencia and seconded by Mr. Hollinshead to approve the consent items as presented. Roll Call Vote, Ayes: 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead, and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

XIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Appointment of Tania Castro as the SMBSD Parent Representative for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Santa Barbara County SELPA

Presented by Armando J. Uribe Executive Director of Special Education

It was moved by Mr. Valencia and seconded by Mr. Hollinshead that the Board of Education **APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF TANIA CASTRO AS THE SMBSD PARENT REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) FOR THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY SELPA**, as presented. Roll Call Vote, *Ayes:* 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead, and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

B. Award of BID #2627-01: Modular Classroom Buildings for a New Middle School and New Elementary School on a Shared Campus

Presented by Patricia McKnight, C.P.M., Director of Contracts & Procurement Services

It was moved by Mr. Valencia and seconded by Mr. Hollinshead that the Board of Education **APPROVE THE AWARD OF BID #2627-01: MODULAR**

CLASSROOM BUILDINGS FOR A NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL AND NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON A SHARED CAMPUS, TO AMERICAN MODULAR SYSTEMS, as presented. Roll Call Vote, *Ayes:* 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead, and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

C. **Resolution 26-05: Approving the Absences of Board Members from Meetings of the Board of Education**
Presented by Dr. Darren McDuffie, Superintendent
It was moved by Mr. Hollinshead and seconded by Mrs. Cordero that the Board of Education **ADOPT RESOLUTION 26-05: APPROVING THE ABSENCES OF BOARD MEMBERS FROM MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**, as presented. Roll Call Vote, *Ayes:* 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead, and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

D. **Resolution 26-06 : Filipino American History Month**
Presented by Dr. Darren McDuffie, Superintendent
It was moved by Mr. Valencia and seconded by Mr. Hollinshead that the Board of Education **ADOPT RESOLUTION 26-06: FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**, as presented. Roll Call Vote, *Ayes:* 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead, and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

E. **Resolution 26-07: Native American Heritage Month**
Presented by Dr. Darren McDuffie, Superintendent
It was moved by Mr. Valencia and seconded by Mrs. Cordero that the Board of Education **ADOPT RESOLUTION 26-07: NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH,** as presented. Roll Call Vote, *Ayes:* 4: Mrs. Cordero, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Hollinshead and Ms. Cabral. *Motion Passed.*

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Valencia addressed the increase in ICE activity occurring near schools, throughout the city, and within the county and region. He requested that the board re-establish a task force, which he recalled was composed of community partners and nonprofits, to reconnect and provide families with reliable information and resources. He emphasized that this is a critical time for such efforts, noting that when primary breadwinners in families are taken by ICE, it leaves the remaining family members in need of support. He also commented on the possibility of a board resolution to empower staff regarding the Dual Language Immersion program.

Mr. Hollinshead suggested that the board begin opening the November meeting with a land acknowledgement for the Chumash people. He noted that this practice had been done in the past and expressed his belief that it would be a meaningful and appropriate way to begin the month, which is designated as Native American Heritage Month.

XV. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Board Member Report - Mrs. Cordero

Mrs. Cordero shared that she had the opportunity to visit Miller Elementary School and did a couple of observations for designated ELD. She was invited to read "The Littles," which is a spooky Halloween story, to TK kindergartners. She attended a volleyball game between El Camino and Fesler. She also reported on the State of the City address, highlighting positive news regarding a reduction in crime and increased community support, though she noted the city is facing a financial shortfall. She participated in a Santa Barbara County School Board Association meeting, where she learned about a significant increase in Public Records Requests and the rise in banned books across the country. She also mentioned discussions regarding the impact of e-bikes in the county and the potential effects of El Niño. She highlighted the extension of sub coverage to 70 days to accommodate parental leave and praised the team receiving a Golden Bell Award. Additionally, she shared that the special education department is looking into reclaiming preschools currently run by the county to allow for mixed-enrollment settings. She noted an upcoming school board candidate workshop hosted by the county association scheduled for the following evening.

Board Member Report - Mr. Valencia

Mr. Valencia spoke about ICE and community involvement. He discussed the fear that documented families are dealing with because of the racial profiling, noting that while there is extreme sadness, there is also extreme hope that we can come together as a nation. He commended staff on the Golden Bell Award. He wished everyone to stay safe and well. Special recognition goes to Stephanie Rosas and Wendy Marin for proudly representing SMBSD teachers who were recognized at the county level.

Board Member Report - Mr. Hollinshead

Mr. Hollinshead spoke about watching for illness-related issues and using best practices for hygiene, and he expressed concern and solidarity for all those who are sick.

Board Member Report - Ms. Luz Maria Cabral

Ms. Luz Maria Cabral shared her personal experience regarding the current climate of fear and stress within the community. She noted that many families and students are traumatized by events surrounding immigration enforcement and described her own experience of traveling with her passport for the last two years as a personal response to the current environment.

Superintendent's Report - Dr. McDuffie

Dr. Darren McDuffie shared several updates regarding district events and initiatives. He highlighted the fifth annual Celebration of Culture held on September 25 at Santa Maria High School, describing it as a vivid reminder of the rich traditions and languages students bring to the district. He attended the State of the City along with Board member Mrs. Cordero. Mayor Alice Patino opened the program, followed by presentations. He noted the significant growth coming to the City of Santa Maria and shared the city's newly adopted General Plan 2045 projects. He emphasized the importance of partnering with the city to ensure schools are planned alongside new housing developments rather than after them. He reported on the completion of the first cycle of *Data Reflection Sessions* (DRS). While acknowledging that looking at student data can be frustrating and overwhelming for educators, the superintendent praised the "rich discussions" occurring in *Professional Learning Communities* (PLCs) as teachers work to identify student needs and appropriate support strategies. He expressed pride in the district's work; the superintendent noted that the "messy" feeling of the current process is a normal part of growth and a sign that staff are actively wrestling with the work rather than walking away from it. He shared that October is National Principals Month, and he thanked principals for all they do for our schools and students. In closing, he used the classic starfish story as a metaphor for the district's ambitious goal of reaching 81% student proficiency in five years. Dr. *McDuffie* argued that for *Santa Maria-Bonita*, saving one student at a time is not enough. He emphasized that the district must move beyond small-scale efforts to design systems, structures, and tools that can help all students succeed rather than just a handful at a time.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

President Cabral reported that the next SMBSD Regular Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Signed: _____
John Hollinshead
Board Clerk

Signed: _____
Linda Cordero
Board Member