

**VCSBA Executive Board Meeting**  
**February 5, 2024, 5:15 p.m.**  
Ventura County Office of Education  
Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/99212240471>

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Eleanor Torres, President  
Lauren Gill, VP, Legislation  
Sofya Bagdasaryan, VP, Programs  
Calvin Peterson, Treasurer  
Sabrena Rodriguez, Region 11 Director  
Daniel Sandoval, Delegate  
Darlene Bruno, Delegate  
Beckie Cramer, Delegate  
Arleigh Kidd, CSBA County Delegate  
Dr. Cesar Morales, County Superintendent of Schools  
Cathy Samuel, Executive Assistant

**Absent:**

Gabriela Ornelas, Secretary

**Opening**

Eleanor Torres opened the meeting at 5:17 p.m. and thanked everyone for attending.

**Monday, April 15, 2024, Dinner Meeting Topic “Navigating in a Polarized Political Climate.”**

Eleanor asked Dr. Morales to explain the meaning of the topic “Navigating in a Polarized Political Climate.” Dr. Morales said when the original discussion took place at the August 7, 2023 VCSBA planning meeting, it was a time when school boards throughout California were being confronted on sensitive issues related to ethnic studies, banning of books, etc. Dr. Morales felt this was an opportunity to have our Public Information Officers (PIO) in Ventura County present at the April 15, 2024, dinner meeting. Dave Schermer, Director of Communications is the PIO for the Ventura County Office of Education. Mr. Schermer meets with seven PIOs in Ventura County. They work closely with each other and the California School Public Relations Association (CALSPRA). Dr. Morales suggested table talk discussions where the PIOs could discuss how to navigate through sensitive and polarized topics that exist in their local communities.

Eleanor asked the VCSBA Executive Board members if this is a topic they would like to move forward with for the April 15 dinner meeting.

Lauren thinks this subject is very timely. The Conejo Valley Unified School Board has been dealing with some of these issues over several election cycles.

Calvin said the best time to get information and talk about these subjects is when they haven’t happened yet. When it happens, it is too late. The earlier we prepare the better.

Beckie said before situations arise, it would be helpful if we as Board members and representatives of our districts were on the same page to be able to articulate to the community members what

school Boards are tasked with legally in terms of adopting curriculum and books. The PIOs can help us through that process.

The VCSBA Executive Board agreed to have mixed seating at the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting to have an opportunity to engage with PIOs.

Dr. Morales will meet with PIOs and create a hot topics list from their experiences in their districts or at conferences. He will try to accommodate 7 or 8 tables. Each table can choose the topics to focus on and utilize the expert as a facilitator of the discussion.

### **Newsletter Articles for April 15, 2024, Dinner Meeting**

#### **Potential Newsletter Articles:**

- Eleanor Torres – Presidents Corner – Dinner Meeting Topic
- Lauren Gill – TBD
- Dr. Morales – TBD
- Cathy Samuel - VCSBA Slate of Executive Board Nominees for 2024-25

Articles due: Monday, March 11, 2024

Newsletter emailed out: Friday, March 15, 2024

Email Articles to: [csamuel@vcoe.org](mailto:csamuel@vcoe.org)

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Sabrina said Eleanor and Lauren are interested in continuing their roles for next year. She asked for volunteers and has not heard from anyone. If anyone is interested in serving next year, please email Sabrina or Gabriela Ornelas. She may have to ask for volunteers for other positions.

Calvin said if anyone volunteers for Treasurer he would be happy to let them participate. If no one volunteers he will continue for another year.

Sofya said if anyone volunteers for V.P. Programs she would be happy to let them take the position. If no one volunteers she will continue for another year.

### **Permanent Address for School Districts to send their VCSBA checks**

Discussion ensued about opening a separate VCSBA post office box for the checks received from the school districts. Calvin said there is enough money in the budget for this purpose which will cost around \$125.00 a year. This way, when there is a new treasurer the post office box is passed to the new treasurer and they don't have to keep changing addresses. He said the process of what kind of checks and how those records are kept needs to be updated. Calvin said if no one volunteers to be the treasurer for 2024-25 he would make the necessary changes to update the process. Calvin suggested opening the VCSBA post office box in Camarillo close to the Ventura County Office of Education. It is a central location.

Daniel suggested having a treasurer's email address. This can be hooked up to the USPS-informed delivery and the treasurer would receive an email that lets them know mail has been delivered to the post office box.

The VCSBA Executive Board agreed to have a permanent post office box. Calvin will wait to open the new post office box until he has received all of the checks for 2023-24.

### **Future Meeting Topics**

Dr. Morales suggested to send a survey out after June 30, 2024. It might be best to wait to see how the school year closes and what the state budget picture looks like. There might be a topic of concern or interest to everyone.

Eleanor suggested giving the Board members a survey at the next VCSBA dinner meeting asking what dinner meeting topics they are interested in.

### **Date for School Board Candidate Academy**

Sabrina asked if there is any interest in moving the date of the October School Board Candidate Academy to early September. Dr. Morales asked if anyone else had any thoughts on scheduling the School Board Candidate Academy earlier than October.

Beckie said it depends on what the purpose is. Would it be to give someone who is considering running for office an idea of the position or to train those newly elected school board members? The timing is a little late for becoming a candidate and a little early for becoming a Board member.

Daniel suggested having a FAQ Zoom meeting before the candidate's file. A few of the VCSBA Executive Board members could discuss what it's like to be a Board member. Keep the fall event the way it's always been structured.

Dr. Morales will look into the dates of the School Board Candidate Academy with his team.

### **Next Annual VCSBA Executive Board Planning Meeting & Potluck, August 2024**

Possible meeting dates: August 5, 6, or 7, 2024. Executive Board members will let Cathy know which dates work best for them.

Eleanor offered the Rio School District Office to hold the August 2024 Potluck Meeting.

**Adjournment:** 6:07 p.m.