

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF**  
**May 8, 2020**  
*(Board Budget Study Session)*

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and Moment of Reflection  
The Regular Meeting of the Ventura County Board of Education, Agenda 20-06, was called to order by Dr. Ramon Flores, Board President, at 8:01 a.m. on Friday, May 8, 2020, via ZOOM teleconference. All Board Trustees, staff and members of the public participated in the meeting via teleconference/video conference. Mr. Mantooth gave instructions for the teleconference and requested that all participants keep their speaker muted unless speaking. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Dr. Flores and followed by a moment of reflection.
2. Roll Call  
Trustees Participating via Teleconference:  
Dr. Ramon Flores, Area 5  
Rachel Ulrich, Area 1 – *Joined the meeting at 8:04 a.m.*  
Mike Teasdale, Area 2  
Dr. Mark Lisagor, Area 3  
Rob Collins, Area 4  
  
VCOE Personnel Participating via Teleconference:  
Stanley C. Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools and Ex-Officio Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board  
Misty Key, Associate Superintendent, Fiscal and Administrative Services  
Dr. Antonio Castro, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services  
Dr. Cesar Morales, Associate Superintendent, Student Services  
Dr. Julie Judd, Chief Technology Officer  
Lisa Cline, Executive Director, Internal Business Services  
Emily Mostovoy-Luna, Assistant Superintendent, SELPA  
Dawn Anderson, Director, Comprehensive Health  
Nancy Akkerman, Senior Executive Assistant  
  
Approval of Agenda  
Mr. Teasdale moved that agenda be approved. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous roll call vote (4:0). Mr. Teasdale, Dr. Flores, Dr. Lisagor and Mr. Collins voted aye. Ms. Ulrich had not yet joined the meeting.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENTS**  
None.

**C. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

None.

**D. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION**

1. Budget Study Session

Ms. Key acknowledged the fiscal team, Lisa Cline, Sonia Magana and Alex Villes. They have continued to work on the budget through this pandemic and are still gathering all needed information.

Ms. Key reported that yesterday the Department of Finance issued a fiscal update in advance of the May Revise. This is an abnormal event. Usually, the Governor proposes the budget in January and in May, issues the May Revise. This year a Fiscal Update was issued. It describes the current fiscal health.

In January, the proposed budget was excellent with funding for COLA, special education and categorical programs. Due to the COVID-19 Recession which is being experienced worldwide, 4.2 million claims have been filed for unemployment in March. This job loss is being disproportionately felt by the lower wage earners. The Department of Finance is projecting an unemployment rate of 18% in 2020. In comparison to the Great Recession, this downturn is much more severe.

The State is experiencing a loss of tax revenue (sales, income and property tax). The State is projecting a \$9.2 billion loss in revenue in 2020 and a \$32 billion loss in 2021. This loss in revenue will drive what the Governor proposes in the May Revise. The Prop 98 loss is \$18.3 billion for K-12 public education. This represents a 20% reduction. The VCOE budget was developed prior to COVID-19 and as presented, does not include any estimates of the impact of COVID-19.

VCOE does address any changes in revenue immediately. Currently, we are anticipating an immediate impact on our fee for service programs. Dr. Castro's department is most affected and is working to anticipate changes.

Mr. Teasdale questioned the 20% reduction in State funding and asked what the decline in funding will be when considering federal funding as well.

Ms. Key noted that the DOF did not specifically address how the loss will affect education. The Prop 98 loss will be \$18.3 billion. How the Governor will carry that forward to the education budget is unknown. During the Great Recession, the State addressed the loss in revenue with cash deferrals; COLA was not funded (currently is 2.3%); and categorical programs (professional development) were not funded. The actual funding impact will not be known until the May Revise. Mr. Mantooth noted that he will provide information on the May Revise during the Superintendent's Report at the May 26, 2020 Board meeting. He will also email information to the Board.

Ms. Ulrich asked about cash deferrals. Since they are like an IOU, does the Office have the funds to cover cashflow until the funds are received?

Ms. Key explained that LCFF is a yearly entitlement, based on ADA, that is paid by the State on a monthly basis. Cash deferrals mean the State does not issue the funds until sometime in the future. LEAs know they have the money to spend and expenses are incurred because they do know the revenue will come in. With cash deferrals, districts would likely have to pursue TRANS to cover the cashflow issues. The expense is the cost to issue the TRANS. The impact of cash deferrals is more heavily felt by those districts that receive State Aid. Ms. Key noted that cash deferrals have not yet been proposed; but they are a tool that the state can use. LEAs would prefer cash deferrals to an actual reduction in funding.

Ms. Ulrich asked if there have been any conversations about ADA funding.

Ms. Key responded that no information has been received yet, but the May Revise may contain more information. The State Legislature is required to act on the budget by June 15. VCOE has healthy reserves that will allow the office to adjust to any budgetary issues.

Mr. Teasdale asked what criteria will be used to determine how much is cut in each department. Ms. Key noted that LEAs are only supposed to spend as much as is received and VCOE will spend funds in the specific service areas where funding is received. Cuts would be specific to those areas where funding is reduced. Mr. Mantooth noted that a hiring freeze could be implemented, and/or carryover balances could be utilized. These tools could be used in a graduated way so we continue to serve our students.

Dr. Lisagor noted that we do not anticipate having a realistic picture of the impact of the recession until July 15<sup>th</sup> when taxes are due, even though the budget will have to be adopted on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Key concurred, explaining that the State has notified LEAs that they will pass a budget, but the budget may need to be revised in August or September after actual revenues are known. Mid-year cuts were used in the Great Recession.

VCOE staff members presented information on the various services provided and successes and challenges within their respective programs:

### SELPA

*Emily Mostovoy-Luna, Assistant Superintendent*

Ventura County SELPA has completed a SELPA Belief Statement – A collaborative partnership of educators, students, parents/families, and community agencies, in **Support of Equitable Learning Programs and Access** to educate and empower all students. The Ventura County SELPA is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest multidistrict SELPA in the State with the 20 Ventura County districts and the COE taking part in serving 18,890 students have IEPs. Countywide special education students represent 12.7% of the student population. Districts average 10-16%. State average is 11%.

SELPA is funded on total ADA; currently \$114 million dollar budget (state, federal and property tax). The total amount spent on services is \$350 million. The gap of \$235 million (67% of funding) is provided through General Fund contributions. Special Education is supposed to be funded by federal contributions of 40%; State contributions of 45%; however, State and Federal funding continues to decrease. The current SELPA operating budget is \$1.3 million which primarily pays for staff. Over 98% of total funds are sent directly out to districts.

The role of the SELPA is to implement the Local Plan which identifies services for all individuals with exceptional needs residing within the geographic areas served by the plan and assure compliance with State and Federal mandates. The Local Plan has been revised this year to align with the State template. In addition, the SELPA has 40 employees the majority of which are OT, PT, and Behavior specialists, counselors, social and emotional specialists, mobility specialists, deaf and hard of hearing, assistive technology, and adaptive PE specialists who provide services to the local school districts. SELPA also helps fund special education teachers and paraeducators at Gateway and Providence. The SELPA also offers approximately 140 professional development trainings attended by approximately 5,000 staff.

A Community Advisory Committee comprised of parents from throughout the County and community agency representatives meets 4-6 times a year to provide advice to the SELPA.

The SELPA holds interagency MOUs with large agencies including Ventura - County Behavioral Health, Tri-Counties Regional Center and California Children's Services. The SELPA operates the Early Start Program for students ages 0-3, and the WorkAbility program for high school students.

The budget is closely monitored as we are the fiscal agency that is disbursing funds. We are working closely with the Districts to develop budgets. The statewide target base rate of \$557 per ADA was reached last year and we are hoping this will continue; but there are great concerns. May need additional staffing next year to help students get caught up from the effects this year of COVID. We will continue to ensure that we are providing services to students.

SELPA will be partnering with VCOE to open the VCOE Odyssey program to support students with conduct and behavioral disorders. Two classrooms will begin in August 2020 and will be located at Gateway. The SELPA will continue to work on supporting Inclusive practices through professional development. SELPA will support member districts in taking the Local Plan to each school district Board for approval. The budget will be hard and we will continue to advocate for full funding at the federal level to reduce the impact on the general fund.

Mr. Collins noted that he has seen the support provided by the SELPA. Are we making contact with special education students who are going on to college? All of the districts are focusing on social emotional contact with each student. Each student is called and asked how they are doing. This effort continues at our office and at all districts.

Mr. Teasdale stated that with the anticipated drop in funding and the legal requirement that IEPs are met; does the SELPA issues with services? The SELPA's focus is to follow the legal process as much as possible during this time. When there is a concern, the team is meeting virtually to discuss options with the parents. Some services cannot be provided but in this uncertain time there are questions that cannot be answered. As we continue to receive guidance and receive more information, we will be in a better place to address those concerns.

Ms. Ulrich highlighted the 1% administrative costs and noted that this is amazing for a government agency. Ms. Mostovoy-Luna noted that the majority of staff are fee for service and paid by the districts. The districts are paying 67% already and we will continue to operate on as slim a budget as possible.

Ms. Ulrich noted that she has heard that switching to distance learning has been especially hard for students on IEPs. Ms. Mostovoy-Luna reported that it is very hard to adjust such individualized learning to distance learning, but staff continue to do their absolute best to the greatest level possible. We continue to get stronger in our support of students with disabilities.

#### COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH and PREVENTION PROGRAMS

*Dawn Anderson, Director*

VCOE's Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs (CHPP) provides leadership and professional development in safe schools, suicide awareness and prevention, alcohol, tobacco and drug prevention, mental health services, youth development and coordinates meeting of the counselors collaborative and district nurses. In addition, they oversee the administration of the Healthy Kids Survey.

CHPP is unique in that it is primarily grant funded. Alcohol and drug prevention grant is \$300,000 (\$80,000 increase). Ventura County Behavioral Health has recently recognized the CHPP for their work in expanding services to students. A \$6 million Mental Health Services grant is used to provide health screenings, early intervention services, and suicide prevention services. Twelve school district will partner in these efforts. The grant will be \$2 million per year.

This year ends the previous 5 year TUPE grant. The new grant is anticipated to be \$2.2 million over 3 years (\$739,000 per year). Funds are used for Tobacco use and vaping prevention services. Nine districts are represented in this grant. TUPE services are also provided to small districts.

VCOE and Ventura County Behavioral Health have partnered in a mental health services grant. Funds will be used to establish 8 wellness centers at local high schools with a focus on mental health services. Annual budget of \$1.5 million per year for 4 years.

All programs offered by CHPP are listed on the VCOE website. Although grant funds have been increasing, the current challenge is providing services remotely. The rate of suicides in our children is alarming.

Ms. Ulrich asked if any of the programs have an attendance survey or is student participation tracked. Ms. Anderson noted that the after school programs such as Friday Night Live do track participation. There is programming within the curriculum and exit interviews are provided. Two youth conferences are usually offered. This year the youth conference will be done remotely and via video.

Ms. Ulrich noted that she has seen and heard that as a result of social distancing, there seems to be a rise in drug, alcohol and tobacco usage. Districts will need these CHPP services even more.

#### TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

*Dr. Julie Judd, Chief Technology Officer*

Dr. Judd reported the Technology Services Department is comprised of 28 staff members who provide effective, innovative and consistent services to students, parents, teachers and staff. Student achievement, professional development, economies of scale services for districts are provided. The technology department works closely with curriculum, technology, and industry leaders and statewide agencies to ensure 21<sup>st</sup> century technology is provided to all customers.

Technology services provided include software and data services, Human Resources and Escape payroll systems, Student Information System, and Student Assessment system. Technology maintains two data storage centers, connects all districts and the county, provides disaster recovery systems, data storage management, professional development and training, media literacy, and technology support for all staff, students and parents. Services are also provided for small school districts and charter schools. HiSpeed bandwidth is provided via fiber to all districts. National Park services is a partner.

In response to COVID-19, technology tools were expanded. Microsoft 365 and Google services were enhanced and Chromebooks and WiFi devices were provided. Training on Google, Microsoft 365 and Zoom was provided for teachers and staff. Online student education has been created and technology support is provided for all students and staff. The network and infrastructure teams are working on the Mary Samples Education Center. The technology team meets daily via ZOOM to address any issues that arise. Dr. Judd thanked her entire team for their daily efforts,

Dr. Flores thanked Dr. Judd, her team, and all the teachers across the County for their extreme efforts to switch to distance learning in such a short period of time. He then asked if all districts are using the same LMS? Dr. Judd noted that the LMS are consistent across the districts although there are some districts using Canvass. Oxnard Union High School District has their own LMS.

Dr. Flores asked if there have been discussions with vendors to get higher speed internet to areas that would not always have it. Dr. Judd noted that this has been a subject of discussion throughout the state. VCOE has contracts with all of the providers in the County. Initial discussions were held with the FCC to see if schools could provide internet for students at a lower cost. That was dismissed. VCEdNet has been troubleshooting in some of the harder to reach areas like Wheeler Springs to bring them connectivity. We are working to leverage partnerships and resources.

Ms. Ulrich reported that as a college instructor, she had to migrate five classes to online learning and it was a huge task. It is extremely difficult and rigorous. There are connectivity issues with students and internet speeds. She expressed her appreciation for our technology department.

Dr. Judd noted that bandwidth is an issue. We have 60 gigabits of bandwidth at our schools but currently our schools are empty. Could students come to the school site and work in their cars? We continue to work closely with district technology directors to help one another.

Ms. Key thanked the presenters for their information. She reminded Board members that this budget was built on assumptions prior to COVID-19. Modifications will be made as final information is received. There is a 45 day revision allowed if there is a material or significant changes. If that is the case, updated information will be brought to the Board.

The specific program budgets presented in this Budget Study Session were reviewed.

Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs. CHPP revenue comes from state and local grants. There is a slight drop in revenue estimated due to the change in the TUPE funding. The decrease is a one time allocation..

County Board of Education. The funds are provided by LCFF. Expenditures include Board Trustee salaries, travel, mileage and a small amount for legal fees.

Curriculum & Instruction. There is an anticipated decrease of \$160,000; the budget will be adjusted as soon as final amounts are known. The decrease in salary and benefits is due to a staff member who retired and was not replaced. One reduction in staff was made to balance the budget.

Differentiated Assistance: LCAP Support & Oversight. There is an anticipated reduction in the budget based on the amount of districts identified for Differentiated Assistance. There are four district for 2020-21 (down from five in 2019-20).

Mr. Teasdale noted that districts may require additional support for financial issues in the upcoming year. Will this fiscal support be funded? Ms. Key responded that the 14 staff members in SBAS provide fiscal oversight for districts. Additional assistance does not increase expenditures, but staff may be providing additional services to support them. The only additional expenses would be if contracts with outside agencies, like FCMAT, were needed.

Ms. Ulrich asked if the expenses listed are a portion of the person's salary or if the staff member is paid by other departments? Ms. Key noted that yes, some salaries are split between funding sources. The funding source is unrestricted however we need to report how funds were expended to support districts.

Early Childhood Programs. This budget is very restricted. Employees are funded specifically for these services. The funding has been increased in recent years. This program is led by Mabel Munoz. All funding sources are listed on page 8.

Educator Support & Effectiveness. This budget supports Teacher and Administrator Induction which is the avenue by which teachers and administrators can clear their credentials. The reduction is due to the number of teachers coming through the program in 2020-21. This program has a balance that they are deliberately spending each year. Mr. Teasdale expressed his support for this program.

Hearing Conservation. The only change to this budget was related to a reduced demand in services. A district has reduced the level of services they would be needing. Less days were contracted for the employee that provides these services. This fund is supported by fee for service revenues.

Library and Learning Resources Display Center. No change to this budget.

Technology Services. There are very few changes in this budget. There are multiple areas of funding including fees for contracted services, LCFF and indirect fees to provide internet and technology infrastructure to VCOE.

Teen Parenting Program. This program no longer has a categorical funding source. A district pays for this program to be provided.

Ms. Key noted that the SELPA budget will be presented at the final budget presentation in June, although many portions have already been reviewed.



Dr. Lisagor thanked staff for their budget presentation. He asked for additional information on Hearing and Conservation. Mr. Mantooth noted that no other County Office of Education has a hearing screening department. With the advent of LCFF, VCOE has been moving this department towards fee for service. The contracts has been increased incrementally each year.

Ms. Ulrich asked if the June budget will include the May Revise changes. Ms. Key responded that the budget may not reflect all the changes, as the changes are often tied to employee contracts, etc. Staff will provide a verbal report.

Mr. Teasdale asked if the State's \$20 billion Rainy Day fund can be used? Should the Board be lobbying for use of this money to support education funding? Ms. Key explained that the report from the Department of Finance stated that the actual loss in revenues will be 3.5 times more than the Rainy Day fund (reserves). There will need to be reductions in State revenue. Mr. Mantooth noted that any advocacy for education funding with our local legislators is always appreciated; and explained that no more than 50% of the Rainy Day funds can be used in any one year. A letter signed by our office and all school districts was sent to Superintendent Thurmond asking that Rainy Day funds be utilized and the additional federal funds be pursued. The letter also addressed the reopening of schools and ADA calculations. Mr. Mantooth will forward a copy of the letter to all Board members.

Mr. Mantooth thanked Ms. Key and her budget team for their extreme efforts and noted that the Board will receive 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> interim reports but the budget is always up to date on the software system.

#### **E. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

1. Mr. Collins expressed his thanks for the presentations. The changes over the past 3 months and the budget deficit have been drastic. The changes will be felt for years to come.
2. Mr. Teasdale also thanked staff for the budget preparations.
3. Ms. Ulrich talked about the vulnerable populations for education. We need to protect the education of our younger population, we are risking their health and their future. We need to advocate for our students who are at long term risk.
4. Dr. Flores thanked staff for the budget study sessions.

#### **F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Presentation on Charter School Acts Legislative Changes – May 2020
2. Textbook Review and Adoption – May / June 2020

**G. FUTURE MEETINGS**

Mr. Mantooth noted that staff will likely be presenting a request to cancel the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting due to changes in the LCAP adoption requirements.

Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2020  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, June 15, 2020  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, June 22, 2020  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

**H. ADJOURNMENT**


Dr. Flores adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**Minutes Approved by Board Action on 05/26/20**

May 26, 2020  
Date

  
Dr. Ramon Flores, Board President

May 26, 2020  
Date

  
Stan Mantooth, Ex-Officio Secretary and  
Executive Officer of the Board

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