

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF
February 27, 2023**

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Call To Order, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and Moment of Reflection

The Regular Board Meeting of the Ventura County Board of Education, Agenda No. 23-03, was called to order by Arleigh Kidd, Board President, at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 27, 2023, in the Board Room of the VCOE Conference and Educational Services Center at 5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Mr. Kidd, followed by a moment of reflection.

2. Roll Call

Trustees Present:

Rachel Ulrich, Area 1
Michael Teasdale, Area 2
Dr. Mark Lisagor, Area 3
Arleigh Kidd, Area 4
Dr. Ramon Flores, Area 5

VCOE Personnel Present:

Dr. César Morales, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools and
Ex-Officio Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board
Misty Key, Deputy Superintendent, Fiscal & Administrative Services
Consuelo Hernandez Williams, Associate Superintendent, Student Services
Lisa Salas Brown, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services
Emily Mostovoy-Luna, Associate Superintendent, SELPA
Teri Page, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Stephanie Rodriquez, Director, Alternative Education
Teresa Vega, Assistant Principal, Providence
Marlo Hartsuyker, Director of Charters
Alicia McFarland, Director, Early Childhood Programs
Regan Bynder, Coordinator, Early Childhood Programs
John Meza, Facilities
Wanda Runcie, Executive Assistant
Nancy Akkerman, Sr. Executive Assistant (Sub)

Guests:

Jessica Kidd

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Ulrich moved the agenda be approved with the deletion of Agenda Item C.1, Attendance Appeal Case No. 23-02. Dr. Flores seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Morales distributed written copies of Public Comments made by Carole and Timothy Shelton during the January 23, 2023, Board Meeting.

C. HEARINGS

1. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 23-02
Per approval of the agenda, this item was cancelled.

D. CLOSED SESSION

None.

E. PRELIMINARY

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of January 23, 2023 and Special Board meeting of February 10, 2023.
Dr. Flores moved the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 23, 2023, and the Special Board Meeting of February 10, 2023, be approved. Ms. Ulrich seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

F. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

G. PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS

(Reports by Board members regarding their individual activities affecting the Office pursuant to Govt. Code Sec. 54954.2(a)).

Upcoming Events

VCOE Equity Conference	March 7, 2023
805 Industry Day (Moorpark College)	March 10, 2023
CCBE County Governance Workshop	March 10-11, 2023
Science Fair	March 24, 2023
Migrant Education Speech & Debate Tournament	March 25, 2023
Science Fair Awards	March 27, 2023
VCSBA Dinner Meeting	April 27, 2023
Battle of the Books	April 28, 2023
Teacher of the Year VCOE	End of April, 2023
Boswell Art Walk	May 2, 2023
Student Art Show	May 18, 2023
Impact II Awards	May 23, 2023
All Staff Gathering	May 24, 2023
Teacher of the Year-Ventura County	End of May, 2023

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Teasdale thanked Dr. Morales for agreeing to provide a session on Governance at the CCBE Conference. The CCBE Trustee handbook has been well received and additional sessions on Governance will be presented at the CCBE Conference in September.

Ms. Ulrich reported that she is looking forward to the CCBE Conference in Sacramento.

Dr. Flores thanked staff for providing a tour of Gateway for a local school board member. The tour was fabulous, and the visitor was very impressed with Gateway. Dr. Flores also attended a Providence Graduation. He is continually impressed with the students and their dedication to overcome obstacles. He also attended the Digital Equity Conference held at VCOE. Dr. Flores thanked Ms. Key for her work on a Budget session for the CCBE Conference.

Mr. Kidd reported that he also will be attending the CCBE Conference. Mr. Kidd highlighted various Upcoming Events.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morales reported on the following activities of the Office:

Update on ENGIE / Solar Energy Project

Ms. Key distributed an email from ENGIE, energy consultants, which details electricity usage, battery storage and other factors considered. The result of the energy analysis is that VCOE would be cash negative if solar energy was pursued. The capital investment would exceed the amount of savings generated. Another factor is that currently VCOE is in 100% financial hardship for State School Construction bonds. If VCOE were to expend any funds on capital outlay projects, it could jeopardize this funding that is currently being audited for Triton School. The Office will continue to explore alternatives. VCOE acts as the hub for internet and electricity for all districts in any emergency.

Information on VCOE Fiscal Oversight Role

Ms. Key distributed copies of the FCMAT Fiscal Oversight Guide. This information is also available on the FCMAT website. This valuable guide contains all the statutory requirements for district budget oversight. Page 12 is a chart that details steps for reviewing budgets. Resources are also included.

Update on Ojai Unified School District

Dr. Morales reported that Ojai Unified School District is presently in a negative certification on their budget and the district has until March 15th to make the appropriate cuts to stabilize their budget. Dr. Morales presented to the Ojai School Board and community reminding them of the urgency of the cuts. He is hopeful that at a meeting this week, the Ojai Board will commit to the necessary cuts in personnel and other areas. Failure to make the cuts by March 15th will trigger a lot of state required processes including the possibility of a state loan and the removal of local governance and the local Superintendent.

Dr. Morales and staff are working hard to help Ojai to maintain solvency. The current goal is to make \$3 million in cuts. A subsequent audit will be completed tomorrow, and it could increase the amount of cuts that would be necessary. An additional second period interim report could also cause additional cuts. The Ojai District Finance Committee will be meeting on March 1st to prepare comments to the Board during their special meeting that evening. Their budget must be resolved by March 15th or further statute actions will begin. Assemblymember Bennett is aware of the situation should there be a need to pursue a state loan for that district. Ojai Unified is being asked to take action that was requested in their qualified audit received last year. Ventura County Board members can reach out to Dr. Morales if they have any further questions.

I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

None.

J. CONSENT/ACTION ITEMS

(All matters specified as Consent Agenda are considered by the Board to be routine and will be acted upon in one motion. There will be no discussion of these items prior to the time the Board votes on the motion unless members of the Board request specific items be discussed and/or removed from the Consent Agenda)

1. Temporary County Certificates

Dr. Lisagor moved the Board approve Consent Item J1. Ms. Ulrich seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

K. PRESENTATIONS

None.

L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION

1. Annual Programmatic Audit by Vista Real Charter School

Marlo Hartsuyker welcomed and introduced representatives from Vista Real Charter School who presented information required in the annual programmatic audit.

Ms. Manley, VRCS Area Superintendent, reported that VRHS has now been in existence for 17 years. Enrollment at VRHS fluctuates throughout the year and is currently at 1,380 students. VRCS is open year-round and enrolls students year-round. VRCS has six learning centers in Ventura County serving students from 17 years to 24 years of age. The majority of students are at 6th grade or below level for reading and 5th grade or below in Math.

VRCS qualifies as a Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS). To be eligible, charter schools must have an unduplicated count of at least 70% of their total enrollment. 76.4% of VRCS is unduplicated. The average student attends for 1-2 years.

Ninety-one percent of VRCS seniors graduated (286 students) last year. Information gathered from phone calls on where students go after graduation was reviewed.

Mr. Teasdale asked what the average reading level of graduating students is. VRCS is aware of the challenges students with low reading levels face and acknowledges that this continues to be a challenge.

Dr. Morales asked of those students entering the workforce, what industries are they entering? Ms. Manley noted that VRCS is developing a more specific survey that would provide more information. VRCS understands that just because a student is credit eligible to graduate does not mean they are ready for work/career. VRCS would like to provide follow-up care for students. Mr. Teasdale indicated his appreciation for the efforts to keep students in school.

Testing data was reviewed. The primary assessment tool is NWEA. NWEA is a nationally recognized assessment tool for reading and math. It is a good indicator for teachers to see where students are at when they arrive. VRCS often sees student

improvement from spring to fall. Additional tools to support student success include: more rigorous student expectations; extended learning day; open during school breaks; and the addition of specialized paraprofessionals. Academic interventions and learning loss recovery for English Language Arts and Math are provided.

The budget was reviewed. Three-year projections reflect significant increases largely due to multiyear State grants in Arts / Music and Emergency Block grants. Additionally, COLA and ADA have increased. Federal funding has been reduced.

Expenses increase with the revenue. State funding must be spent in the fiscal school year received and additional staff has been hired to address many of the grants. Salary and benefits have increased 11% including this additional staff. VRCS expects excess revenue to increase to \$2.9 million. The initial fund balance of \$12.8 million is anticipated to increase to \$16 million. Cashflow is healthy.

Ms. Ulrich questioned services and operating expenses and asked what this includes. VRCS noted these services and operating expenses are covered more extensively in the written responses. VRCS did increase expenditures with \$2 million in additional staff.

Mr. Teasdale asked how and if these services and staffing will be sustained if based on one time funding. VRCS responded that much of the funds go to increasing the hours of existing staff. Staff hired based on one time funding are given temporary contracts. Job descriptions are specific to one time funding-based positions.

Health and Safety Measures were reviewed including strategic scheduling; regular cleaning; monitoring; and social distancing. VRCS can quickly switch to virtual learning if necessary. All students have a notebook and hot spots are provided if necessary. Site safety teams are in place. Social Emotional wellness is very important for students. Empowerment workshops, trauma resilient, student respect, social workers, and counseling services are provided to students. A large percentage of students take advantage of these programs.

VRCS is working to increase college and career readiness opportunities. Dual enrollment opportunities are provided through local community colleges. FAFSA and college application workshops, career counseling, resumes and mock job interviews events are provided.

Dr. Lisagor asked if VRCS students can take advantage of the services at the Career Education Center. VRCS indicated that the two most attended programs are Nursing and Welding. Transportation can be a challenge as Learning Centers are geographically spread out.

Mr. Teasdale asked if there is a career awareness program. Each VRCS student has to take a career exploration course and counselors work one on one with students discussing options for post-graduation. The Career Coordinator position will be offering more of these opportunities.

Mr. Kidd asked if the state mandate, passed five years ago, calling for fewer expulsions has led to a significant change in enrollment. VRCS indicated that it has not.

Ms. Ulrich asked about dual enrollment and highlighted the importance of this for students. VRCS is working on MOUs with VCCCD at this time. Student support is provided as well. This item was presented for information only.

2. School Safety Plans

Dr. Consuelo Williams noted that all Ventura County Office of Education operated schools have established Comprehensive School Safety Plans. In accordance with Board Policy No. 0450, Safety Plans are reviewed on an annual basis by the school safety planning committee, modified as needed, and changes are approved by the County Superintendent of Schools. Pamela Heron has worked with staff and coordinators to update the School Safety Plans. Dr. Williams reviewed the ten areas of revisions.

Complete School Safety Plans will be available for review for the next 30 days in the Superintendent's Conference Room at 5189 Verdugo Way, Camarillo.

3. Transitional Kindergarten

Lisa Salas Brown introduced Alicia McFarland who reviewed a presentation on transitional kindergarten. UPK (Universal Pre-Kindergarten) and TK (Transitional Kindergarten) are components of P-3 which connects education from 3 years old to grade three. UPK provides every four-year old with access to high quality learning the year before kindergarten. TK is the only program that must be offered solely by an LEA to children turning four years old by September 1 of the 2025-26 school year.

In 2010 Kindergarten age eligibility was changed. In 2014 and 15, additional requirements were added. In 2022, TK Requirements were added including the provision that TK be provided to all 4-year olds by 2025-26; that average class size be 24 students with an adult to student ratio of 1:12 and that one adult must be a TK credentialed teacher who meets additional qualifications. Any local educational agency (LEA) operating a Universal TK (UTK) means that by 2025–26, regardless of background, race, zip code, immigration status, or income level, every child will have access to TK as a quality learning experience the year before kindergarten.

Currently 36% of 4-year olds are receiving services in TK. VCOE provides supports and resources for LEAs, including professional development trainings, internal partnerships support educators, such as the joint bridge that includes those who have their Early Childhood credential; academic advisement is provided through Teaching Stars Pathway to support advancement and retention of early childhood educators and qualifications for TK credentialed teachers by incentivizing activities.

Dr. Lisagor asked about the impact of TK on closing the achievement gap. Without making TK mandatory, will this actually close the gap or increase it. Ms. McFarland noted that the sooner we begin to work with children and families, the better the outcome. TK and UPK could also lead to a reduced need for alternative education programs, and reduced worry for families in need of food and security (meals are provided). There are other options for families – private programs, Headstart, etc.

Dr. Flores asked if students down to 4-year level are assessed for special education. Does VCOE need additional staff to meet the needs of this program. Some students enter TK after already being assessed for special education. Workforce continues to be a challenge nationally. The State, through CTC, is providing additional pathways and supports for preschool teachers. A TK permit is available for someone who already has an early childhood degree and is working towards their credential.

Ms. Ulrich asked about the specific courses that are required for TK credentials and if the cost of these courses are covered. There is funding for the additional coursework provided. We currently have 14 teachers participating in this program. Completion incentives are also provided.

Mr. Teasdale asked for the paraeducator role. Many districts are being creative for the second teachers in the classroom. There is professional development provided for TK and paraeducator staff. There is a need for additional workforce. Family childcare providers are incentivized to move towards a Bachelor degree and credential. We also acknowledge that it might not be the goal of everyone to become a credentialed teacher rather than a paraprofessional.

Does providing TK offer school districts the ability to recover positions due to declining enrollment. Teachers whose positions are reduced due to declining enrollment could enter the TK positions if they meet the additional qualifications.

Ms. Salas Brown noted that the positive aspect is having students and families join the education community earlier. This item was presented for information only.

4. Resolution 23-01 In Support of Increases for Funding for County Office of Education Operated Juvenile Court and Community Schools

Ms. Ulrich moved to approve Resolution 23-01 in support of increases for funding for County Office of Education operated Juvenile Court and Community Schools.

Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously (5:0)

5. Approval of Revised 2022-23 Gateway Single Plan for Student Achievement.

Dr. Williams reported that the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) is a plan of action developed to raise the academic performance of all students which includes proposed expenditures of funds allocated to the school through the Consolidated Application. Each goal is assessed and evaluated. The SPSA is updated annually and approved by the School Site Council prior to approval by the governing board of the local educational agency. Dr. Williams acknowledged the efforts of staff on these student achievement plans

Dr. Lisagor made a motion to approve the Revised 2022-23 Gateway Single Plan for Student Achievement. Dr. Flores seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

6. Approval of Revised 2022-23 Providence Single Plan for Student Achievement.
Mr. Teasdale made a motion to approve the Revised 2022-23 Providence Single Plan for Student Achievement. Ms. Ulrich seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Ms. Ulrich congratulated both schools on the increase in graduation rates.

Mr. Teasdale stated that he is always impressed by the care and guidance provided to the students.

M. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dr. Flores reported that he is looking forward to the CCBE Conference.

Ms. Ulrich reported that she will miss the Monday, April 24th meeting.

Mr. Teasdale reported that he will be attending a Coast2Coast conference which also conflicts with the April 24th meeting. The Board took a quick poll and there will be a quorum on April 24th as Dr. Lisagor, Dr. Flores and Mr. Kidd will be in attendance.

Mr. Teasdale thanked the Board for approving Resolution 23-01. CCBE is working with CCSESA to get results for students. These two agencies are meeting monthly, which is very valuable.

N. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. MATES Charter School Programmatic Audit – April 24, 2023
2. Discussion of VCOE Goals Matrix (requested by Mr. Teasdale)
3. Report on Scholarship Fund and Grants for Providence Students (requested by Dr. Lisagor).

O. FUTURE MEETINGS

Date: Monday, March 13, 2023
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Friday, April 21, 2023
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board (Budget Study)

Date: Monday, April 24, 2023
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

P. ADJOURNMENT

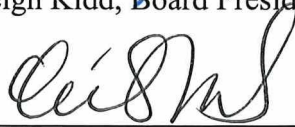
Mr. Kidd adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Date: 3-13-23



Arleigh Kidd, Board President

Date: 3-13-23



Dr. César Morales, Ex Officio Secretary and
Executive Officer of the Board