

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF
FEBRUARY 26, 2018**

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 18-03, was called to order by Rachel Ulrich, Board President at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 26, 2018, in the Board Room of the VCOE Conference & Educational Services Center, 5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Ms. Ulrich, followed by a moment of reflection.
2. Roll Call
Trustees Present:
Rachel Ulrich, Area 1
Marty Bates, Area 2
Dr. Mark Lisagor, Area 3
Dean Kunicki, Area 4
Dr. Ramon Flores, Area 5

VCOE Personnel Present:
Stanley C. Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools and Ex-Officio Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board
Dr. Roger Rice, Deputy Superintendent, Student Programs and Services
Misty Key, Associate Superintendent, Fiscal and Administrative Services
Dr. Antonio Castro, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services
Mary Samples, Assistant Superintendent, SELPA
Emily Mostovoy, Executive Director, Special Education
Marlo Hartsuyker, Director, Charter School Support and Oversight
Poul Hanson, Director, Facilities
Roger Ruiz, Facilities Assistant
Nancy Akkerman, Senior Executive Assistant
3. Approval of Agenda
Ms. Ulrich noted that Agenda Item C.1 has been cancelled. Mr. Bates moved the agenda be approved as amended. Mr. Kunicki seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

C. HEARINGS

1. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 1802 (*Interpreter Requested*)
CANCELLED.

D. CLOSED SESSION

None.

E. PRELIMINARY

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 22, 2018
2. Approval of Special Meeting of February 13, 2018

Mr. Kunicki moved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, and the Special Meeting of February 13, 2018 be approved. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

F. CORRESPONDENCE

1. VCSBA Breakfast Meeting Announcement, March 17, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Topic: Differentiated Assistance and District Accountability. Dr. Flores plans to attend.
2. Mr. Mantooth distributed correspondence from Mr. Kunicki to all Board members regarding a request for an agenda item on school safety.

G. PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS

1. Ms. Ulrich reviewed the Upcoming Events. Mr. Kunicki plans to attend tomorrow's Providence Graduation.
2. Dr. Lisagor attended a Providence Graduation on February 22nd. He will also be attending the CSBA Advocacy Day.
3. Dr. Flores attended a Providence Graduation on February 12th and will also be attending the March 5th graduation.
4. Ms. Ulrich also attended a Providence Graduation on February 12th and will be attending the March 5th graduation. Planning of the CCBE Fall Conference is continuing. School and Student Safety will be the focus.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mantooth presented the following information on the activities of the Office:

1. Memo from MATES Charter School providing additional information on projected deficit spending.
2. Memo from BRIDGES Charter School providing additional information requested during the programmatic audit on unenrolled families. In addition, the memo addresses a concern raised by Mr. Kunicki regarding the treatment of a special education student at BRIDGES. Ms. Samples and Ms. Hartsuyker investigated the complaint and provided a brief recap.

The parent was contacted and the situation was discussed. The problem seemed to stem from two areas – the handling of the IEP and the actions of two teachers. A meeting was held with BRIDGES staff to review the details of the complaint.

The problems occurred during a time of massive staff transition at BRIDGES – the entire middle school staff was new and classroom management was an issue. All staff have since received training in classroom management. Regarding the handling of the IEP, BRIDGES staff thought they had been meeting the parent and student’s needs. The takeaway was that additional parent communication is needed.

Mr. Kunicki noted that the Board did not receive information about the ongoing turmoil with staffing at BRIDGES. There seems to be one problem after another at BRIDGES and he would appreciate more ongoing reports and/or monitoring.

Dr. Flores asked if the teachers in question are still at the site. One was released and theirs was the more egregious offense. Dr. Flores suggested a letter of notice regarding any concern, or possible proposed changes to the MOU.

Dr. Rice added that Ms. Hartsuyker is working on possible revisions to Board Policy 0420.4, Charter Schools, to address these issues.

Ms. Samples provided the Board with additional information regarding charter schools and Special Education. All charter schools in Ventura County (except Vista Real) belong to the Ventura County SELPA. All schools and charters receive the same amount of funding for special education regardless of the number of special education students. Charter schools do not serve preschool students with disabilities, nor do they serve post secondary students. Most charter schools receive enough funding to cover their special education services, while districts are providing 62% of the cost of special education services from general education fund.

The SELPA includes regionalized programs for handicapping conditions so every student receives the services they need. The SELPA insures that all students have a place where they can receive services. In most cases, charter schools only serve mild-moderate disabilities. In Ventura County, a charter school has never referred a student to a specialized or countywide program, likely because students with severe handicapping conditions are likely receiving services from a certain district and historically, Special Education parents do not often switch programs.

Ms. Ulrich clarified that all charter schools receive funding for special education regardless of whether or not they have any special education students attending. Ms. Samples stated that was correct.

3. Learning Communities Grant. The Office is pursuing this grant. It would provide \$160,000 per year for three-years.

I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

None.

J. CONSENT/ACTION

1. Travel Expense Claim

2. Temporary County Certificates
5. Notice of Completion for Venco Electric Inc. for Camarillo SE School Phase II: Site Electrical Utilities Bid Package 2017-05B Electrical Disposal of Property

Mr. Kunicki requested Consent Items 3-4 be pulled for discussion.

Dr. Lisagor moved Consent Items 1, 2 and 5 be approved. Mr. Kunicki seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

3. Change Order No. 2 to California Electric for Camarillo SE School Phase II: Site Utilities & Stormwater Filtration Bid Package 2017-05C Plumbing
4. Notice of Completion to California Electric Company for Camarillo SE School Phase II: Site Utilities & Stormwater Filtration Bid Package 2017-05C Plumbing

Mr. Kunicki asked if there has to be a Change Order when the job is completed. Mr. Hanson noted that this is a requirement of the reporting procedures.

Mr. Kunicki moved Consent Items 3 and 4 be approved. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

K. PRESENTATIONS

1. Update on VCOE Operated Special Education Programs

Dr. Rice noted that tonight's presentation will focus on VCOE Operated Special Education Programs. Ms. Mostovoy introduced all Special Education Principals and Program Specialists including: Aran Burke, Brett Taylor, Cathi Nye, Sarah Galloway, Karla Curry, Robert Scheerger, Debe Emmanuel, Amy Stencler, Stefanie Rodriguez, and Michelle Harding. Debe Emmanuel who will be retiring this year after 25 years with VCOE.

There are currently 86 special education classrooms located on 22 different school sites. VCOE Special Education serves students aged 3 to 22 with a focus on functional academics, communication, community access, and building independence. Students with severe socio-emotional needs are served in the Phoenix school programs and those with Autism are served at Triton Schools. Transportation is provided for over 900 students utilizing 91 busses. Support services include behavioral specialists, mental health specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, nurses, psychologists, speech therapists, and paraeducators.

The VCOE Special Education programs are currently pursuing WASC Accreditation. WASC accreditation validates the school's program and transcripts – an area that has been lacking and affecting students as they try to enroll in community colleges or the military. The initial visit will be held very soon with a full visit and formalized report anticipated in May – August. The Board offered their full support of this process.

Triton Academy is moving to a new facility in Camarillo. The new facility will provide enhanced programs with additional quiet rooms and confidential workspaces for staff. Parents and staff are comfortable with the new location.

Michelle Harding, Program Specialist, oversees the professional development needs of special education staff. Initial and Annual Non-violent Crisis Prevention and Intervention (NCPI) training is provided to all teachers, paraeducators, specialists, office managers, bus drivers. 9 staff members have been trained as trainer of trainers. Training on CHAMPS, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and Standards Based Curriculum and coaching has been provided. VCOE is in Phase II of the Diagnostic Center Project at Phoenix Schools. This provides strategies for the students and parents.

Karla Curry, Principal. West County special education services include Balboa Middle School where 2 special education classrooms are located for 16 6th to 8th grade students; Boswell School serves 59 students aged 18-22 with a focus on job training, independent living and community-based instruction; Ojai Teams which serves 6 students aged 18-22; and Ventura High School which operates 3 classrooms serving 26 students in grades 9-12 where students have the opportunity to participate in integrated activities with the general education campus.

Cathi Nye, Principal, Penfield School. Penfield serves preschool – 5th grade students with moderate to severe disabilities. There are 3 preschool and 8 elementary classrooms. Currently 108 students from Ojai, Ventura, Oxnard. Very connected to the local community with many organizations and schools doing their community service at this site. Emilie Ritchen Preschool provides education for preschool students with Autism. 90% of students return to their home district at the end of this preschool program.

Robert Scheerger, Principal. Dos Caminos Preschool serves 28 preschool students. Speech therapy and OT are integrated into each school day. Two classrooms - a visually structured class for autism; and a classroom for special education. Peer models are utilized in every class.

James Foster Middle School services students in grades 6-8 with moderate to severe disabilities in two programs - 6 classrooms for moderate to severe disabilities; and 2 classrooms for students with social emotional needs. Successful integrations of emotionally challenged students into general education classrooms.

Debe Emmanuel. Carl Dwire serves 89 preschool - 5th grade students with moderate to severe disabilities in 9 classrooms. Two programs offered - a visually structured program for students with autism; and a functional skills and mobility program. Students have the opportunity to integrate with general education school next door. Sunkist School serves 14 students from K-5th grade in two classrooms. Many opportunities for general education integration. Williams Preschool serves preschool students. Speech therapy and OT integrated into the school day with opportunities for general education integration.

Brett Taylor and Stefanie Rodriguez. Triton Academy is a researched based school designed to address the needs of students with Autism. The program addresses the language, communication, behavioral, sensory and social needs often associated with Autism. Work prioritizes the development of self-regulation and self-management skills needed to develop the perspective and relationship skills that can lead to success in college and career. Currently serve 77 students in 11 classrooms. Family express that Triton is changing their lives – that they can take their students out to dinner now. All Specialists are on site every day. Students have opportunities to integrate with UCMS students with UCMS students trained as autism ambassadors. Triton students participate in a workability program. Triton has a PTO, Talent Show, Jog-a-Thon, and School Spirit week.

The new Triton Site will be able to serve up to 88 students. Mr. Kunicki asked if there was additional funding for additional staff, would the program grow? For the program to be successful, an optimum size needs to be maintained. All students attend via a referral process with the local school districts. The district reviews the best location for the profile of the student. Some attend their own district with just some modifications.

Triton also offers a high school diploma tract, which is very unique. WASC Accreditation is being pursued at both Triton and Phoenix. Gateway and Providence have joint accreditation. WASC accreditation would allow these sites to grant credits which would in turn allow students to pursue grant funding to continue their education. Triton and Phoenix School students were actually being impacted when trying to enter the military, enter colleges, job opportunities.

Sarah Galloway and Amy Stencler, Phoenix programs.

Phoenix offers a specialized, research-based environment designed to support 6th – 12th grade students with social-emotional and behavioral needs. Phoenix works collaboratively with Ventura County Behavioral Health (8 VCBH counselors are on site) to teach students self-management skills and strategies. Each student receives weekly, individual and group counseling. A clinician is also on site to meet with them as needed. Parents indicate that for the first time, their children are successful. Students have the opportunity to attend CEC classes and participate in a workability program. An Annual 80s dance and Thanksgiving Feast are highlights. Star lunch and Star breakfast earners can utilize the fully functioning professional kitchen Phoenix had their initial WASC visitation was today.

Phoenix Los Nogales serves 24 K-5th grade students with social-emotional and behavioral needs in three classrooms. Phoenix Moorpark serves 12 2nd – 8th grade students in two classrooms. Both sites experienced some students returning to their home school districts. Both sites work with their local sheriff's office to increase police awareness and understanding of Phoenix students.

Aran Burke, Principal, East County Schools. Five sites - 2 elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school and 1 post-secondary program - serve Kindergarten to post secondary students in the East County. Moorpark Access currently serves 30 students aged 18-22 who benefit from job training. Triggs serves 13 K-5th grade students, many with physical disabilities who benefit from functional mobility work. California Children's Services operates a clinic on the school site providing medically based physical therapy and occupational therapy services to students. Eagle Scouts provide service projects. La Mariposa serves 25 K-5th grade students. Students benefit from the many PTA sponsored events and inclusive activities with the general education school. Las Colinas Middle School operates two 6th – 8th grade classrooms with 14 students (next year projected to be 20 students). Cross Age Tutor program provides one to two 7th grade general education students in every classroom every day. Moorpark High School has one classroom for students aged 14-18. The program focuses on language, communication, behavioral, and social needs of students.

Ms. Mostovoy thanked staff for their work and dedication to every student. Mary Samples noted that SELPA is very proud of the programs operated by VCOE. Statewide, many school districts are taking back special education programs from the County. That is not the case in Ventura County. Mr. Mantooth also thanked staff for their tremendous efforts.

Mr. Kunicki expressed his extreme appreciation for all of the work done with our special education students and the resources that staff makes available for parents and their students. He related two personal stories.

His cousin Gerald had cerebral palsy from birth. It was his parents' goal that Gerald be given the opportunity to develop into whatever he wanted to be. As a child, he was included in all the neighborhood activities – baseball and bicycling. He was never left out. Gerald went on to become the chief executive officer for all the hospitals in Cook County Chicago. It was that early training and support and encouragement from his parents that allowed Gerald to accomplish great things in spite of his illness and to see the resources available now for these students and parents just pulls at his heartstrings.

When Mr. Kunicki's daughter was young, she came home from school crying. She said her school had some new students that were being "mainstreamed" and the other kids were being so mean to them - terrorizing them, throwing food at them, calling them names. He asked his daughter to think about what she and her friends could do about it. A week later he got a call from the school principal relating that Mr. Kunicki's daughter and her friends has started an "adopt a handicapped kid" program where they each took a special needs students and included them with their group of friends to give them support.

Mr. Kunicki told staff, "Your work is a calling and you are doing great work. It's not just a job to you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Mr. Mantooth added his thanks. It goes without saying how poignant this work is. You work directly with our special needs students all the time. He always thinks of three words when he considers the work of Special Education staff ... Family, Service and Love ... not necessarily in that order.

L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION

1. Budget Revision #2

Ms. Key reported that there have been few changes since Budget Revision #1. Page 2, Career Education Center, shows an accounting correction. The \$4 million will occur in the 18-19 budget. Other revisions include open positions that had not been filled.

Dr. Lisagor moved the Board approve Budget Revision #2 as presented. Mr. Kunicki seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

2. Second Period Interim Report

Ms. Key reported that Page 6 reflects cash flow issues regarding billing for special education. In the past, the office has carried 10 months of service before bills were issued to the districts. Mr. Kunicki asked how the office is protected if the school districts need extra time to pay. Ms. Key noted that the office would know if there were cashflow issues for the districts and billing would be adjusted accordingly. Our role is to work with the districts to serve all students.

Page 27 notes deficit spending. There are \$112 million in revenues and \$116 million in expenditures. The office is working to address the \$4 million deficit. Page 79 includes the multi-year projections. Where there are projected negative budgets, the office is working to reduce expenditures. There may also be additional state revenues that could resolve these areas.

Contributions to STRS and PERS are increasing. CalPERS is making the decision to shorten the repay schedule. It will be dependent upon interest rates and income. The office is budgeting for possible increases.

Ms. Ulrich indicated her appreciation that the County Office does not maintain huge reserves but instead spends funds on the students that are here.

Mr. Kunicki expressed his opposition and his desire that the office have appropriate reserves to weather any recession.

Ms. Key expressed her appreciation to the Board for dedicating \$12 million to pay off the VCOE Conference Center debt. She also appreciates the Board's dedication to restore that same reserve at a rate of \$1 million per year.

Dr. Flores moved the Board acknowledge review of the Second Period Interim Report with the Superintendent's positive certification. Mr. Kunicki seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

3. 2018-19 Course Catalog for Career Education Center
Dr. Rice presented the 2018-19 Course Catalog for Career Education Center Program. A major difference over previous years is that the actual schedule of courses is included in this year's course catalog. Two new courses were added - Mechatronics which feeds into the course at CSUCI; and a residential construction program which responds to the construction needs caused by the Thomas Fire.

Moorpark Unified School District has requested that more classes be offered during the daytime hours so Moorpark students can access the courses more easily. Dr. Morse is working on this issue and will be meeting with Dr. Hays, Superintendent, later this week.

This item was presented for information only.

M. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

1. Mr. Kunicki addressed his request that the Board potentially take a leadership role on school safety. What does and doesn't VCOE have in place? Is there anything VCOE can do better to protect students? Would the Board want to issue a position statement including what the Board is doing for our students? Would the Board agree to have this item agendaized for a future meeting?

Mr. Mantooth noted that last Friday the District Superintendents met and one of the topics of discussion was School Safety. Local Ventura County districts are way ahead in protecting their students. While they recognize that there is no way to guarantee the safety of every student; they are continually looking for ways to improve safety.

VCOE operates 86 classrooms at 22 school sites. At those sites, VCOE personnel follow the local school district's safety protocols. Dwire, Penfield and Foster have one-way-in sliding glass doors, with a mechanism to immediately lock the door by pushing a button.

The Airport Campus is problematic. The office is researching the possibility of installing a locking, rolling gate that would include a key card. Another possibility would be to add cameras. There are a lot of adult students at CEC. How can we limit access but allow access when needed? These conversations are ongoing. All school site perimeters and classrooms are lockable. Five schools have remote locking doors that can be locked and unlocked immediately by a secretary.

On February 14th, Dr. Rice sent an email to all VCOE sites reminding all administrators and staff to immediately take stock of 7 listed items that ensure the safety of our children. Dr. Rice will share the email with Board members. At a recent Student Services branch meeting, all staff members had a chance to provide information on any safety needs they felt needed to be addressed. Facilities has been very responsive to all requests. Dr. Rice walks the schools personally and takes pictures of any areas that need to be addressed by Facilities.

All VCOE staff have received active shooter training. The Office subscribes to “Run, Hide, Fight.”

We believe in increasing the safety of our schools by investing in our students. We are doing everything possible to ensure that students feel a part of the community and accept responsibility for their actions. CHAMPS, school counselors, restorative actions, behaviorists who work with students at Gateway, Providence and Phoenix, and emotional health counselors on site are all part of the effort to increase school safety. The new CEC at Moorpark has perimeter fencing, and rolling gates are being installed.

Dr. Flores asked if office staff are reminding authorized charter schools to address safety at their schools and sites. Ms. Hartsuyker is the primary communicator with the charter schools.

Ms. Ulrich reported that the CCBE Fall Conference will focus on emotional and physical safety of all students.

Mr. Kunicki suggested that the office ask the Ventura County Sheriff to do an inspection of our school sites. He suggested that staff approach the State Board of Education and request additional funding to make our district or school a safety model.

N. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Joint meeting with VCCCD (*January – March, 2018*).
Ms. Ulrich reported that the Chancellor of VCCCD has requested a pre-meeting of the County Superintendent, the Board President, the Chancellor and the VCCCD Board President. This meeting is being scheduled.
2. Report on School Safety (*March 2018*)

O. FUTURE MEETINGS

Date: Monday, March 26, 2018
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 (*Budget Study Session*)
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, April 23, 2018
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

P. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ulrich adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Approved by Board Action on 3/26/18.

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