

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF  
JANUARY 22, 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 18-01, was called to order by Rachel Ulrich, Board President at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 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:  
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  
Marlo Hartsuyker, Director, Charter School Support and Oversight  
Julie Judd, Chief Technology Officer  
Nancy Akkerman, Senior Executive Assistant
3. Approval of Agenda  
Dr. Flores moved the agenda be approved. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

**B. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**C. HEARINGS**

None.

**D. CLOSED SESSION**

None.

**E. PRELIMINARY**

1. Approval of Minutes of Annual Organizational Meeting of December 11, 2017  
Mr. Kunicki moved the Minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of December 11, 2017 be approved. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

**F. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. VCSBA Dinner Meeting Announcement (February 5, 2018) and Newsletter. Dr. Rice announced that Mr. Kunicki will be recognized for 12 years of service. Mr. Kunicki, Ms. Ulrich, Dr. Lisagor and Dr. Flores plan to attend.

**G. PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS**

1. Ms. Ulrich reviewed the Upcoming Events.
2. Dr. Lisagor reported that he attended a Providence Graduation. The graduate credited VCOE staff for helping her turn her life around.
3. Ms. Ulrich will be attending the first CCBE Planning Committee Meeting for CCBE Fall Conference 2018.

**H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*Dr. Rice presented the following information on the activities of the Office:*

1. Ventura County STAR Article on Dr. Ramon Flores honoring his years of service in STEM education.
2. Letter from CSBA supporting schools that had been effected by the Thomas Fire.
3. Staff is working on a \$175,000 grant for homeless education. This is now a competitive grant. Application due February 1, 2018.
4. Gateway will be hosting a "Spring Student Showcase" on Thursday, March 15th at 6:00 p.m. at Gateway Community School.
5. Mary Samples has notified the office of her upcoming retirement sometime this summer. Her expertise in Special Education will be greatly missed.

**I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

None.

**J. CONSENT/ACTION**

1. Travel Expense Claim
2. Temporary County Certificates
3. Disposal of Property
4. Williams Quarterly Report to County Board of Education

Dr. Lisagor moved that the Board approve Consent Items 1-4. Mr. Kunicki seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

**K. PRESENTATIONS**

None.

## **L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION**

### **1. Annual Programmatic Audit Presentation by Bridges Charter School**

Dr. Rice noted that VCOE's process for oversight of Charter Schools includes an annual update by the Charter School. Marlo Hartsuyker introduced presenters from Bridges including: Cindy McCarthy, Assistant Director; Marci Crawford, Board President; Dr. Kelly Simon, Director; Benny Martinez, Business Advisory Services; and Bridges Charter School teachers and parents.

Marci Crawford, Board President, thanked Ms. Hartsuyker for her support and guidance. There have been many changes at Bridges and the relationship Bridges has with the VCOE staff has been extremely important. Ms. Crawford introduced Dr. Simon, new Bridges Director, and stated that she has been an excellent addition to the staff. Everyone is excited about her leadership, Parent Information Nights are extremely popular, and the Bridges Board is confident that the work she is doing will be reflected in the next programmatic audit.

Dr. Simon noted that Bridges experienced many changes last year. Bridges continues to focus on Whole Child education which allows students to explore their own areas of interest. Project Based learning and parent engagement are very important. The Leadership Goals for 2017-18 were reviewed.

Goal I:	Enrollment and Attendance
Goal II:	Develop a Safe, Responsible and Respectful School Community A new positive behavior program has been implemented
Goal III:	Communication from teachers to parents. Parent Square which allows for increased communication was implemented.
Goal IV:	Student Learning

Student Enrollment Data. Current enrollment is 410 students. 35 parents attended the first Parent Information Night. Three more are planned.

Student Attendance Data. Outreach in this area has increased ADA. Efforts to recruit and retain student subgroups continue. Outreach efforts include: Promotion at the local NfL Preschool, Social Media, local neighborhood outreach via word of mouth, bilingual school tours, and the addition of a hot lunch program is planned. Parent communication is available in multi-languages. Comparison data for CVUSD was provided.

Staffing. An RtI specialist has been added to provide additional support in reading and math.

2017-18 budget. Mr. Martinez reviewed the Governor's budget proposal which includes full funding for LCFF and \$260,000 in one-time funding for charter schools. The proposed budget is based on 397 students. Actual enrollment is 410 which will increase the revenues and lower the small deficit. The 2018-19 and 2019-20 budgets show no deficit spending due to the projected one time funding.

Step and Column increases for staff and one time expenditures for technology are built into the budget. The Extensions Day Care program is now running in the black. The budget is solid going into the future. A multiyear financial summary was reviewed with an ending balance of \$1.4 million in 2019-20.

Student Assessment Data was reviewed. CAASP results indicate that students are meeting or exceeding standards in ELA and these results are trending up. These results are true across all subgroups. Bridges is performing at or above CVUSD at all grade levels. Dashboard for ELA maintained status and subgroups continued to make positive progress. Literacy is integrated across all grade levels. Teachers have engaged in curriculum map planning. An RtI teacher was hired to support students who were reading below grade level.

CAASP results for Math were reviewed. Math scores have dropped significantly. Contributing to this was a new math teacher last year and the need to improve the testing atmosphere. An analysis of Bridges students' math scores compared to CVUSD reflect deficits in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The other grades are still below grade level requirements, but the gap is less. An action plan has been developed to address these grade levels.

Middle School has become an area of focus for additional support. Dashboard results for math show significant declines across all subgroups. An Action Plan has been developed and includes interventions, professional development and instructional changes. Bridges teachers are all deeply invested in turning this around. Work is being done to align curriculum and utilize teaching methods that are in line with Common Core.

Short and long terms steps to address the challenges have been developed. Short term efforts include Math tutorials and math intervention each afternoon. A new math teacher has been hired, a science teacher will provide math support during his planning period, and the RtI teacher has been given an additional day to provide math support. Teachers have identified an additional 30 minutes per week where they can provide math support.

Professional development will be led by Dr. Vicki Vierra. Student progress will be analyzed more often, and teachers will discuss and integrate instructional strategies for promoting math reasoning and literacy. Students have utilized NGSS to develop project based learning. Whole Child learning is stressed in all courses.

Suspension Data was reviewed. Six students were suspended last year. New initiatives to support social, emotional and behavioral needs at Bridges include teachers and staff receiving training in conflict resolution; new positive behavior plan has been developed; additional counseling; school-wide "Safe and Caring Schools" curriculum has been implemented; and proactive and preventative approaches have been developed.

Parent Climate Survey. Bridges continues to enjoy high levels of parental commitment and enthusiasm for the school. Parents indicate their students are being supported.

Dr. Lisagor stated his concern that 124 students were disenrolled last year – does Bridges know why this happened. Last year there was a large transition in both teaching staff and administration. A significant number of families left but new families have filled all of those spots.

Dr. Flores asked if exit interviews were performed for families that disenrolled to determine the reason for leaving. Official exit interviews were not performed but most parents indicated it was due to the new administration and the large number of new teachers last year.

Dr. Lisagor addressed the Math scores and the action plan developed. Has Bridges seen any positive results since the changes were implemented? Bridges was aware that Math scores would need to improve, but did not realize the scores were so low until recently. The changes that have been made are very new, so growth has not yet been seen. Local assessments will be provided and data can be reviewed and analyzed before the April State testing results are released. Bridges anticipates positive results by April.

Dr. Flores asked if Bridges currently offers a lunch program, indicating that Bridges will not attract socio-economically disadvantaged students if there is no free lunch program. Also, are parents required to volunteer a certain number of hours? Bridges does not currently offer a lunch program, but they are researching for future years. Bridges does not require parent participation, however they do suggest it. Volunteerism can be after hours, outside of the classroom.

Dr. Flores requested a demographic breakdown of the students suspended and of those students who disenrolled in the past year.

Mr. Kunicki asked if homeschoolers participate in testing. They do.

Mr. Kunicki questioned the reason for the high amount of administrative turnover. Bridges is in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of existence. The original administrator had a conflict with the Board. The second administrator worked a year and a half and then had to leave. An Assistant Administrator was hired to fill in while the hiring process took place. The third administrator was hired and had egregious ethical issues. The opportunity to hire a new administrator has made a difference. This turnover was the cause of much of the student disenrollment and staff changes.

This lack of consistent leadership led to many teachers vacating their positions, and open positions were often filled with substitutes or teachers who were not necessarily agreeable with the Whole Child concept. Those teachers have now been replaced with highly skilled teachers who are supportive of the school climate and ideology.

The Bridges Board feels that the school is now going in a much more positive direction. In the past, administrators were hired internally. For this final administrative search, a consultant was utilized for the hiring process with Dr. Carroll and Dr. Smith assisting. The Board reviewed the applications and the candidates were interviewed by a panel of Board members, a staff panel and a parent panel. They believe they have found the right person in Dr. Simon and are ready to move forward.

Dr. Rice noted that many charters struggle as they transition from implementation to ongoing operations. The site administration also struggled with financial issues. Consistent quality leadership has been a problem at Bridges for awhile. Mr. Kunicki suggested that the charter school contact VCOE for assistance with future hiring.

Mr. Kunicki asked if the Whole Child model might be contributing to the lack of focus on Math. In the past, this may have been the case, but teachers are now working to interconnect Math through multiple subjects. Mr. Kunicki requested a progress report on Math results in four to five months. The math results are concerning.

Ms. Ulrich noted that other charters have struggled with Math scores. She hopes that Bridges will see improvement moving forward. Does Bridges teach Algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or international math? Bridges offers 8<sup>th</sup> grade Common Core Math 1, and an advance tract Algebra class. Ms. Ulrich asked if interventions should be started in 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade if scores are dropping in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades. The school community was not overly supportive about testing and they therefore did not practice testing as they should have. Not enough instructional minutes were provided, and the drop in test scores was not anticipated; but interventions have been quickly put in place. Ms. Ulrich requested that math scores be broken out between homeschoolers and in class students.

Ms. Ulrich asked the reasons for the six suspensions. The suspensions were limited to mostly serious offenses - physical contact, posting sexual contact on social media, and bullying.

Dr. Rice noted that when VCOE heard that testing is not embraced at Bridges he reminded the charter school that for a charter to be renewed it must demonstrate comparable student achievement as a condition of renewal. For that reason, Ms. Hartsuyker told the school that testing must be implemented. Bridges has complied.

2. Revisions to 2017-18 Student Program Calendars

Dr. Rice noted that due to the recent Thomas Fire, school sites throughout the county were closed. East county sites were closed much less often, while schools within Ventura Unified (Penfield, Boswell, Balboa, Ventura High) were most impacted. Schools in Camarillo and Oxnard were closed due to the lack of nutrition services, transportation issues due to road closures, air quality, etc. Medically fragile students need to be inside as much as possible. A handout showing when VCOE sites were open and closed was distributed.

Ms. Key discussed the financial implications. There is a State attendance waiver process and districts can file a waiver to cover the days missed. There is also a plan to address a “material decrease in attendance”. The State will hold the districts and VCOE harmless for the loss of ADA during the emergency. FEMA claims are also available. If the State doesn’t cover something; FEMA will pay the difference. Our office did experience a material decrease in enrollment in December even though we were open. The reason for the absences were fire related. VCOE staff will be meeting with local school district Chief Business Officials to assist in computing the loss of ADA.

Due to the days missed, some VCOE school calendars needed to be revised. The Career Education Center calendar has been adjusted to reflect that the second semester will start on January 22 instead of January 8, 2018. The Providence School second semester will start on February 1 instead of January 29, 2018, but no revisions are needed since the approved calendar does not designate semester start and end dates. Phoenix School, Triton Academy, and Gateway Community Schools will not adjust semester calendars but instead will enable students to earn partial credits commensurate with Board Policy 6146.1 and not to be negatively impacted by missed instructional days.

Mr. Bates moved the Board approve revisions to 2017-18 Student Program Calendars. Dr. Lisagor seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

3. Adoption of Special Meeting on February 13, 2018, 6:00 p.m.  
Dr. Rice reported that an Expulsion appeal has been filed with the office and in order to meet the required deadlines for hearing the appeal, the Board will need to schedule a Special meeting. Dr. Lisagor moved the Board schedule a Special Meeting on Tuesday, February 13, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. Dr. Flores seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote (5:0).

#### **M. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

1. Dr. Flores questioned the impact of the federal funding.
2. Ms. Ulrich indicated her regret that Ms. Samples is retiring and her appreciation for the work she has done.

#### **N. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Joint meeting with VCCCD (*January – March, 2018*)

#### **O. FUTURE MEETINGS**

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

Date: Monday, March 26, 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 7:41 p.m.

***Minutes Approved by Board Action on 02/26/18.***

*Board meetings are recorded by audio tape pursuant to Government Code Section 54953.5(b).  
Copies of these audio tapes are available by request to this office at (805) 383-1900.*