

VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF
August 26, 2019

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 19-10, was called to order by Dr. Ramon Flores, Board Vice-President, at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, August 26, 2019, 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 Dr. Flores and followed by a moment of reflection.
2. Roll Call
Trustees Present:
Rachel Ulrich, Area 1
Mike Teasdale, Area 2
Dr. Mark Lisagor, Area 3 – *Absent*
Rob Collins, Area 4
Dr. Ramon Flores, Area 5

VCOE Personnel Present:
Misty Key, Associate Superintendent, Fiscal and Administrative Services
Dr. Antonio Castro, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services
Dr. Cesar Morales, Associate Superintendent, Student Services
Marlo Hartsuyker, Director, Charter School Support and Oversight
Dawn Anderson, Director, Health and Prevention Programs (CHPP)
Amber Macias, Project Specialist, CHPP
Gabe Teran, Operations Specialist, CHPP
Catherine Puccetti, Prevention Coordinator, CHPP
Maritza Garcia, Administrative Assistant, CHPP
Nancy Akkerman, Senior Executive Assistant
Bryan Meza, Facilities Technician

Guest:
Daniel Hicks, Ventura County Behavioral Health Prevention Services Manager
3. Approval of Agenda
Ms. Ulrich moved the agenda be approved. Mr. Collins seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote of those in attendance (4:0).
Dr. Lisagor was absent.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

C. HEARINGS

None.

D. CLOSED SESSION

None.

E. PRELIMINARY

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 24, 2019
Mr. Collins moved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 24, 2019 be approved. Mr. Teasdale seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote of those in attendance (4:0).

F. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

G. PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS

1. Mr. Collins reported that he attended the Leadership Team Retreat and congratulated the team for a very successful meeting. Good interaction at the table and excellent discussions.
2. Mr. Teasdale added that he was impressed with the quality of people employed at VCOE.
3. Ms. Ulrich reported that she attended the CCBE Leadership meeting where a discussion of whether CCBE should have advocacy in Washington DC took place. She requested that Board members forward any opinions to her.

Ms. Ulrich reported that there is no longer a CCBE newsletter. If anyone would like to submit an article on county issues to the CSBA or even the VCSBA newsletter, please feel free to mail them to her. The topic of an upcoming VCSBA Dinner meeting will be vaping and e-cigarettes. First death in the nation tied to e-cigarettes in people under 30s has occurred. It is a very timely topic.
4. Mr. Collins noted that LA Unified receives 16% from the federal government for Special Education when the law states that it is to provide 40%.
5. Dr. Flores reported that he too attended the Leadership Team Retreat and found it excellent. A tour of the new Mary E. Samples Special Education Center was provided and it was very impressive.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Key reported on the following activities of the Office:

1. Oak Park Unified School District adopted a Resolution in Support of Advocacy for Ventura County's Public Schools.
2. Ventura Unified School District has provided notice that they will be assuming responsibility for Special Education programs operated by VCOE at Ventura High School and Balboa Middle School in the 2020-21 school year. VCOE will continue to operate the Boswell School program for the 2020-21 school year. Employees are protected under the rules of the SELPA. They will have rights for employment with VUSD.

3. Notice of Violation concerning Inspire Charter School - Kern. This letter is provided for the Board's information. Inspire Charter School is authorized by a school district in Kern County but was operating four sites in Ventura County. Inspire Charter School did respond to this notice and the four sites in Ventura County have been closed. Communications will continue.
4. Back to School Events for 2019-20 were distributed. Board members are encouraged to attend any of these events. Please notify the office.
5. Travel Information for the CCBE Fall Conference, Monterey, September 12-15, was distributed to Board members.

I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

None.

J. CONSENT/ACTION

1. Mileage Reimbursement Claim
2. Temporary County Certificates
3. Disposal of Property
4. Williams Quarterly Report to County Board of Education
5. Change Order No. 9 to Viola, Inc. for Camarillo Special Education New Construction: 20 Classroom School Bid 2018-34
6. Change Order No. 1 to United Construction & Landscape, Inc. for Carl Dwire School Modernization Phase III All Remaining Work Bid 2018-31

Ms. Ulrich moved the Board approve Consent Items 1-6. Dr. Flores seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote of those in attendance (4:0).

K. PRESENTATIONS

1. Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Pillar of Prevention Award for VCOE Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs
Daniel Hicks, Ventura County Behavioral Health Prevention Services Manager, presented the VCBH Pillar of Prevention Award to Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs (CHPP) staff: Dawn Anderson, Director; Amber Macias, Project Specialist; Gabe Teran, Operations Specialist; Catherine Puccetti, Prevention Coordinator; and Maritza Garcia, Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Hicks stated that Dawn Anderson and her team work to preserve and promote health Countywide. Their recent contributions include: Safe School Initiative, Drug Prevention efforts, Prescription drug and prevention information for parents, and assistance in helping schools prepare to respond to crisis. Ms. Anderson co-chairs the Suicide Prevention task force in a collaborative way that taps the value of multiple departments. Mr. Hicks stated that there are many things that the County could not have accomplished without the work of this team.

L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION

1. Vista Real Charter High School Notice of Concern

Ms. Hartsuyker stated that on June 17, 2019, the County Superintendent shared a Notice of Concern previously issued to Vista Real Charter High School based on a change in their bylaws on Board membership. Decision making power was given to a third party rather than to VRCHS. This took the autonomy from VRCHS and gave it to an independent third party. When the notice of concern was received by Vista Real, a Board meeting was quickly held to address the concern and the bylaws were changed, removing the sole statutory provision, as requested. VCOE has accepted this remedy.

Corinne Manley, Regional Vice President, Learn for Life, and Ernie Villegas, VRCHS Board member, addressed the Board.

Ms. Ulrich asked if at any time the VRCHS Board was disbanded and if Board members are local? VRCHS representatives responded that the VRCHS Board was not disbanded at any time and of the four VRCHS Board members, 3 reside in Ventura County and one does not. The Board currently has 4 members but they are looking for a local representative to fill the fifth seat.

Mr. Teasdale expressed that he did not understand why the VRCHS Board would give up its governance role to an outside agency. Ms. Corinne Manley noted that Learn for Life serves at risk students throughout the State. It is time consuming to find local representation. Also, the sole statutory provision was adopted as part of an effort to maintain the corporate image of Vision for Life Schools. There are 20 charter schools throughout the state under the umbrella of Learn for Life, all with the goal of serving at risk students. The provision was adopted but the decision making was still being done on a local level. It was more of a corporate decision that did not affect the local board.

Mr. Villegas, VRCHS Board member commented that the reason he joined the VRCHS Board was because he was impressed at how the school targeted at-risk students in Ventura County. VRCHS has always appreciated working with VCOE and staff. When the VRCHS Board received the notice of concern, they determined it would be more appropriate to have the local decision making and changed the Bylaws back to remove the sole statutory provision. Mr. Villegas also noted that the fourth Board member works in Ventura County but lives in Santa Clarita. Mr. Teasdale stated that he continues to be troubled by the decision.

Dr. Flores stated that this was a major change to the Charter School petition. The original decision to approve the charter was based on the fact that all authority and decision making was made at the local level. He is very concerned that the decision was made to give this authority to an outside agency. He was very concerned to see that this decision was made without notification of this Board. He does not like the concern about branding; he wants the focus to be on Ventura County.

Mr. Villegas noted that the local VRCHS Board and administration do have the right to make local decisions. There was never a time when the corporation was making those decisions. He takes pride in what the institution does locally, and in their connections with the community. He also takes pride in the partnership with VCOE and local schools within Ventura County.

Dr. Flores indicated that he does appreciate that the VRCHS Board members are local. This is very important to him.

Mr. Teasdale noted that he is impressed with the Vista Real Charter High School but encouraged the VRCHS Board to be more vigilant in the future.

No action was taken.

2. Superintendent's Salary

Ms. Key reported that in June the Board was provided with a copy of Board Policy 2126. In accordance with Board Policy 2126, the Board reviewed the Superintendent's salary in conjunction with comparison information and input provided by the Associate Superintendent, Fiscal and Administrative Services. The last time this was done was in 2016. In 2017 and 2018, Mr. Mantooth requested that his salary not be reviewed.

Ms. Key provided updated comparison information (noted as July 2019) which includes information on stipends. Comparison data was provided on Southern California County Offices of Education. The median salary is \$240,000 and the average is \$267,000. Class II and Class III (based on amount of students served) County Office of Education data was reviewed. Class II and III are most similar to Ventura County. The median salary is \$247,000 and the average is \$260,000. Comparison data on Large School Districts and Ventura County Community College District was reviewed. The median salary is \$234,000 and the average is \$238,000. Salaries for Ventura County Elected and Appointed Officials show a median salary of \$271,000 and an average salary of \$268,000. The median for all salaries is \$247,000 and the average is \$258,000. The County Superintendent's salary was set in 2016 at \$240,000.

Mr. Teasdale asked what increases the VCOE staff have received. In 2017, the staff received a 2% increase on schedule and a 2% increase in 2018.

Mr. Teasdale asked what the student counts are for Class II and Class III County Offices of Education. Ms. Key will provide this information. Both are similar sized and operate like programs – career education, special education, court and community school.

Mr. Collins asked what stipends Mr. Mantooth currently receives. Mr. Mantooth receives a \$50/month cell phone stipend.

Dr. Flores noted that median salary is a better comparison than average salary. The Sacramento COE operates similar programs, but has many more students.

Ms. Ulrich noted that it is tough to compare across California due to geographical area, cost of living. She would prefer to compare to local districts and county offices. She also urged that Board to consider fiscal responsibility and the cost of any increase due to the increase in STRS.

Mr. Teasdale asked if there is enough budget flexibility to cover an increase. Ms. Key indicated that VCOE does not budget for salary increases because salaries are negotiated with the various employee units. If the Board took action on a number, it could of course be accommodated.

Mr. Teasdale asked about the salary multiplier (cost of benefits). Ms. Key responded that it is approximately 1.25% to cover benefits and PERS. Mr. Teasdale indicated his support for increasing the salary as no increase has been granted since 2016. He suggested an amount which would account for approximately 2% inflation over the three year period.

Ms. Ulrich noted that the Superintendent's salary is already above that of the local school districts. She is not comfortable with large increases. The salary increase for employees was 2%. Average employees are not making \$240,000.

After Board discussion, Mr. Collins moved the Board increase the Superintendent's Salary by 2.5% to \$246,000. Ms. Ulrich seconded the motion, and the motion carried upon a unanimous vote of those in attendance (4:0).

3. Call for Nominations for CSBA Director-at-Large, County
Heidi Wyland, El Dorado COE, is the current CSBA Director-at-Large. Dr. Flores reported that he tried to contact Ms. Wyland to see if she is seeking the office again, but received no response. No action was taken on this item.
4. Approval of Contract for Legal Services with Parker & Covert, LLP
Ms. Key noted that this is the contract currently in place for the Board's legal services provided by Steven Montanez of Parker & Covert, LLP. Dr. Flores noted that legal representation has been used for expulsion cases and interdistrict attendance appeals. This is an hourly contract. Ms. Ulrich moved the Board approve the contract for legal services with Parker & Covert, LLP. Mr. Teasdale seconded the motion, and it carried upon a unanimous vote of those in attendance (4:0).

M. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

1. Mr. Collins shared information on the ethnic studies course that the State Board is considering adding as a high school graduation requirement. The State Board will not make a determination as to what this program will include until March. Hate crimes are rising and students need to develop empathy and understanding. Does the Board want to get involved in providing input into what will be included in this ethnic program?

Ms. Ulrich asked if this ethnic studies program can be folded into the current classes. Dr. Castro noted that there are some districts that are looking into developing ethnic studies courses. Oxnard Union High School District and Ventura Unified are currently exploring this option. The CDE framework does include references to equity. One proposal is to increase the cultures that are studied and/or to teach how to understand and empathize with another culture.

Mr. Collins asked if the Board wants to be a part of the state advocacy on this issue. Mr. Teasdale asked if VCOE is currently involved in this process. Dr. Castro is a part of a statewide group that will be meeting in September and will have some specific information from their upcoming meeting.

2. Ms. Ulrich noted that State Superintendent Tony Thurmond will be at the Santa Barbara County Office of Education on Friday at 11:00 a.m. She suggested that Mr. Collins attend this meeting.
3. Dr. Flores welcomed Dr. Morales to the VCOE.

N. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

O. FUTURE MEETINGS

Date: Monday, September 23, 2019
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, October 28, 2019
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

P. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Flores adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

Approved by Board Action 09/23/19.

*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.*