

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF**  
**January 22, 2024**

**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. 24-01, was called to order by Dr. Mark Lisagor, Board President at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 2024, 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 Dr. Lisagor, 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:  
Lisa Salas Brown, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services  
Dr. Consuelo Hernandez Williams, Associate Superintendent, Student Services  
Dr. Juan Santos, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Lisa Bork, Sr. Executive Assistant  
Wanda Runcie, Executive Assistant  
John Meza, Facilities
  
3. Approval of Agenda  
Ms. Ulrich made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5:0.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Carole Shelton, parent of a Triton student spoke during public comments. She brought to the Board's attention that her son is not able to continue attending school in a small instructional environment like Triton School after turning 18. She continues to look for a program where he can get his diploma. She hopes her voice will help future students in a similar situation.

**C. HEARINGS**

None

**D. CLOSED SESSION**

None

**E. PRELIMINARY**

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of December 11, 2023.

Mr. Kidd made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board meeting of December 11, 2023. Mr. Teasdale seconded the motion and it passed (5:0).

**F. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Letter from State Treasurer, Fiona Ma regarding CalKIDS.

Ms. Ulrich passed this letter to the community college president to disseminate to counselors for student financial aid.

Dr. Williams said this item is on the Student Services Collaboration meeting agenda this week. This information was also included in a countywide bulletin.

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

1. Upcoming Events

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| VCSBA Dinner Meeting .....                                  | Jan. 29, 2024      |
| Academic Decathlon Awards .....                             | Jan. 30, 2024      |
| 805 Industry Day (Oxnard College) .....                     | Feb. 2, 2024       |
| Migrant Education Program, Regional Family Conference.....  | Feb.10, 2024       |
| High School Mock Trial Awards .....                         | Feb. 26, 2024      |
| Middle School Mock Trial Championship Rounds & Awards ..... | Feb. 27, 2024      |
| 805 Industry Day (Ventura College) .....                    | Mar. 8, 2024       |
| CSBA County Board Governance Workshop, Sacramento .....     | Mar 8-9, 2024      |
| VCOE Equity Conference .....                                | Mar. 12, 2024      |
| 805 Industry Day (Moorpark College) .....                   | Mar. 15, 2024      |
| Science Fair Awards .....                                   | Mar. 25, 2024      |
| Coast2Coast, Washington DC .....                            | Apr. 10, 2024      |
| Battle of the Books .....                                   | Apr. 24 & 29, 2024 |
| Impact II Awards .....                                      | May 22, 2024       |

2. Board Members’ Reports

Mr. Teasdale said the Governance workshop in March was originally planned by the CCEE committee headed up by Dr. Flores. Now it is supported by a CSBA transitional work group. He is impressed by the attentiveness of this group to meet the needs of County Board members. There is a CSBA taskforce to help with the CCBE transition that looks promising. He encouraged fellow Board members to continue being aware of what the services are and what the charges are for those services. Mr. Teasdale will be attending the Coast2Coast Conference in Washington DC in April 2024.

Ms. Ulrich will be attending the 805 Industry Day on the Oxnard College campus on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kidd recently attended two graduations, one at Providence and one at Probation. These are great events. The Providence staff appreciates when a Board member attends graduations and Probation does a great job acknowledging these students.

Dr. Flores has been appointed to a 12-month position on the CSBA transition committee. He is pleasantly surprised at the leverage CSBA is putting behind the transition.

He also served as a judge last Saturday at the Hackathon by the Sea. There were roughly a

hundred students participating. He was amazed at the technology knowledge of these students and their ability to produce a product in 24 hours. Besides the top prizes, they had awards such as “The team who knew the least yet learned the most.” He hopes more female students will participate in the future.

Dr. Lisagor said VCOE has amazing staff who puts these events together; the events are very labor intensive. He commented on how nice it is to see students who have graduated from Providence participate in a graduation ceremony at Probation.

## **H. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Lisa Salas Brown presented on behalf of Dr. César Morales who is attending the California County Superintendents’ meeting. She shared an article written by Dr. Morales for the VCSBA Newsletter “*Tough Decisions Required Amid New Fiscal Reality*.” This article noted the declining enrollment and budget deficit education faces. She read a statement from Misty Key which said “The Governor was able to avoid any reductions to public education in his 24/25 State Budget Proposal. In Ventura County, we should still see some right sizing adjustments in staffing related to declining enrollment. The one percent cost of living adjustment isn’t enough to cover increased costs so there may need to be adjustments to maintain balanced budgets. Capitol Advisors will provide more details on the Governor’s Proposal on Wednesday, January 24 at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Room.”

Ms. Brown said there will be an important workshop on Monday, February 12, 2024 titled “The Addiction Inoculation” with Jessica Lahey. This is being sponsored by VCOE, Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs, Community Memorial Healthcare and others. Dr. Allison Shuman, Director of Pediatric Hospital Medicine at Community Memorial Hospital is excited to bring this proactive approach to Ventura County.

At the December 2023 Board meeting, chronic absenteeism was discussed as an area of advocacy. Dr. Williams and her team did some research and put together data for the Board members. The report includes attendance definitions of “*Chronic Absentee, Truant, Habitual Truant and Chronic Truant*” students. A chart on page 2 shows professional development for 2022-24 on meetings, trainings, workshops and seminars. VCOE continues to stay abreast of current legislation. One of VCOE’s staff members is on a state committee.

Technology provides valuable resources in tracking student attendance and providing multiple reports to districts, charters and VCOE schools to address chronic absenteeism. LEA data pulled from Dataquest reflects chronic absenteeism for K-12 over a 4-year period. VCOE schools and programs had a decrease of 11.8% which is a positive outcome. Moreover, 14 of the 19 districts showed a decrease in chronic absenteeism last school year.

Student Services Collaboration’s area of focus last month was the countywide efforts as outlined in the LCAP goals. VCOEs LCAP as well as the 19 districts do address chronic absenteeism under State Priority 5 – Student Engagement. It has a common metric which is measured by statewide metrics which include attendance and chronic absenteeism rates, drop out and graduation rates. Ms. Williams gave examples of LCAP actions aligned to attendance.

VCOE will continue advocating for students to attend school. What can Board members do? Think of the sphere of influence and further promote the countywide attendance campaign. Dave

Schermer does a great job on the VCOE website with press releases and promoting social media posts related to attendance. Most important – celebrate the great successes that have proven effective.

Ms. Ulrich asked if this information is just for VCOE schools. Dr. Williams confirmed that it is. This report is the collaborative work of Mike Winters, Christina Mahone, Student Services and Technology Services.

Mr. Teasdale inquired if there is a demographic data profile on families of kids who miss school the most. What are the programs that have been successful in addressing these cases?

Dr. Williams stated it is the practice on behalf of districts to utilize an information system or a tool that can generate live data. Educators are able to look at who is absent. For example, this has been very effective at Gateway. Their staff collects attendance data after second period. They tag team with the front office and make phone calls to see if the student is sick, missed the bus, etc. Local or supplemental resources then kick in to pick up the student.

Dr. Flores asked if schools have different reporting systems. Dr. Williams said there may be different student information systems, but they have essentially the same function. Every student has a state ID number when they enroll in the state school system.

**I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

None

**J. CONSENT/ACTION ITEMS**

1. Temporary County Certificates
2. Disposal of Property
3. Williams Quarterly Report to County Board of Education
4. School Accountability Report Cards

Mr. Teasdale moved to approve Consent Items J1 – J4. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and the motion passed (5:0).

**K. PRESENTATIONS**

None

**L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION**

1. Annual Programmatic Audit Presentation by Ventura Charter School – DISCUSSION / INFORMATION (20 minutes)

On April 13, 2006, the Ventura County Board of Education approved the charter school petition for Ventura Charter School (VCS). On February 22, 2021, the Board approved the renewal of VCS, with the term of the charter expiring on June 30, 2028. In accordance with the VCOE Charter School Progress Report Timeline, representatives from Ventura Charter School presented information required in the annual programmatic audit detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding which includes provisions for the LCAP.

Dr. Williams introduced Marlo Hartsuyker, Charter School Support Director. Ms. Hartsuyker introduced Lisa Hildebrand, Executive Director and Christi Sandbach, Assistant Director of Ventura Charter School.

Ms. Hildebrand indicated VCS has a total enrollment of 450 students - 414 classroom students and 36 homeschool students. VCS is not currently experiencing declining enrollment. They are growing in the areas of unduplicated student enrollment; Hispanic enrollment has gone from 28% in 2017-18 to 35% in 23-24. This has been a goal for VCS to grow in this area. Attendance has been somewhat steady.

Ms. Sandbach discussed student outcomes through CAASPP scores. VCS results in Math, English, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities and Hispanic Students all met or exceeded the state percentage scores.

Students are still struggling with learning loss. VCS is trying to address the achievement gaps. VCS has overhauled the way reading is being taught. Staff is focusing on foundational skills for the younger students and shifting to a data driven decision model for other students. They are currently using the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) math and reading tests, but have switched the younger kids to Acadience, which is an evidence-based reading tool that focuses on foundational skills for young readers. It allows staff to diagnose skill gaps and monitor interventions.

VCS uses RtI, a multi-tiered system of support. Ms. Hildebrand and Ms. Sandbach meet with the teacher, a psychologist and a data team member and hold grade level team meetings to identify students and then monitor them to ensure the interventions are impacting student outcomes.

School safety is a great concern. Staff members are attending the VCOE Safety Series. Safety is also being addressed in the charter school meetings Ms. Hartsuyker hosts. VCS doesn't have an intercom system. They are now using the Titan App (Titan Health and Security Technologies) to alert students in the event of an emergency. A new campus supervisor has been a great addition and also works to stay connected to the SRO (School Resource Officer). Ventura Charter School is located on the DeAnza Middle School Campus. They have regular drills and act as one school.

VCS has a full-time counselor and psychologist. They have a new SPED team and are building up the program. A half-time SPED teacher has been added due to the student numbers rising.

VCS continues to loop grade levels which allows students to have the same teacher for two years and gives kids a sense of belonging.

CREW (Caring Relationships and Emotional Well-being) curriculum is integrated at all grade levels for social-emotional learning. Students are working hard on habits of work and habits of character.

Ms. Hildebrand said Rudy Calasin was not able to be at the Board meeting; if he were here, he would say that VCS is doing great and the budget is healthy.

Ms. Hartsuyker noted line 38 on the Financial Summary is Learning Recovery Funds which schools have been receiving. VCS took a teacher position and created a TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment) who is a literacy teacher and is focusing on reading foundation. This is the explanation for deficit spending. The TOSA position will stay in place until that money is exhausted.

Highlights for VCS include:

- The Multi-age Journey. (A group of giraffes is called a Journey. The Giraffe is the mascot; it has the largest heart of any land mammal).
- Partnership with EL Education which focuses on three dimensions – Mastery of Knowledge and Skills; Character and Culture and High-Quality student work.
- School Designer gives 20 days of onsite support to work on plan goals.
- There is a focus on teacher well-being. Twenty-three teachers were sent to six different professional development opportunities including reading, math, social-emotional learning, managing the active classroom and school culture.

The VCS marketing team is trying to increase their online presence to ensure there is a healthy student waiting list.

Dr. Flores was pleased with the increase in the Hispanic student population. He inquired about the facilities, wondering where VCS is in terms of capacity.

Ms. Hildebrand noted that the school is full. Ventura Unified granted them another room this year. Dr. Castro is fantastic and aware of VCS. Aging facilities and space are a struggle.

Dr. Flores also asked about moving student assessments from the “not met” to the “met” category. Is the assessment allowing measured growth?

Ms. Hildebrand said data teams meet with teachers and grade levels. A lot of energy is put into data discussions with teachers. Ms. Sandbach said Acadience is a progress diagnostics tool.

Mr. Teasdale was pleased with the increase in diversity at VCS. He noted the state tests are mediocre and asked what other methods are used to see progress. Ms. Sandbach said they are in a rebuilding phase and on a learning curve. Students are currently taking the tests now and VHS can report later on mid-year data.

Ms. Ulrich was pleased with the positive relationship with Ventura Unified.

Dr. Lisagor thanked the staff from Ventura Charter School, he said the passion they feel for students comes through loud and clear.

2. 2022-23 Audit Report – INFORMATION / ACTION (15 Minutes)  
Administration recommends the Board accept the 2022-23 Audit Report for the Ventura County Office of Education as presented by Eide Bailly.

Lisa Cline introduced auditor Royce Townsend from Eide Bailly. Mr. Townsend reviewed the 2022-23 Audit Report for the Ventura County Office of Education. He said this is an overview of the audit process as of June 30, 2023 and is intended to provide reasonable assurance.

Dr. Flores moved the Board accept the 2022-23 Audit Report for the Ventura County Office of Education as presented. Mr. Teasdale seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (5:0).

3. SELPA Update – DISCUSSION / INFORMATION – (15 minutes)  
SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area) Leadership presented information on services including the new statewide Alternative Dispute Resolution five-year grant in partnership with Tehama County Office of Education.

Ms. Salas Brown introduced Joanna Della Gatta, SELPA Executive Director. Also presenting were directors, Regina Reed and Jeanine Murphy.

Ms. Della Gatta said the reduction in the ADA over the last few years has impacted growth. In the school year 2022-23 (K-12) there were 136,000 students in our SELPA which includes 20 districts plus Las Virgenes Unified School District with 18,800 special education students. This is a 13.6 % increase. This is in alignment with the state percentage.

Ms. Murphy highlighted some happenings from the five-year State Pathways to Partnership grant which began July 1, 2023. She highlighted their partners, the Ventura County Office of Education, SELPA, Tehama County Office of Education (TCDE) and their SELPA, CCEE (California Collaborative for Education Excellence, CDE (California Department of Education) and community support - Rainbow Connection and Rowell Family Empowerment.

Advocating for alternative dispute resolution has been a journey. The work SELPA started two years ago led them to apply for this grant. TCDE replicated Ventura County's program and it was successful in that they were able to resolve disputes early on, and that is how the two County Offices and SELPAs were able to apply for the grant together.

Ms. Murphy shared the system of support in place throughout the state where collaboration takes place which includes engaging with content experts.

Ms. Della Gatta said SELPA presented their essential objectives to the Superintendents' Policy Council a few months ago. The SELPA supports districts and families. The objectives this year include fiscal collaboration and support, master contracts, revision of the Local Plan and oversight of the ADR Resource Grant. She said they meet monthly with special education directors and program specialists, they collaborate with LEA's

charters, parents and the community. They provide professional development and alternative dispute prevention and resolution.

SELPA provides support for CALPADS reporting and compliance activities. This year, SELPA is updating the Local Plan, the SELPA website and the Special Education Parent Guide. Several years ago, when Ms. Murphy started working here, the Local Plan included policies and procedures and that was really all that it was until about three years ago. Three years ago, the CDE required the Local Plan be put into a statewide template. At that time, it was difficult to separate the policies and procedures from the operations. The goal for this year is to make the concise responses to match what the prompts and the questions are and leave the details to the policy and procedure manuals which can be updated on a regular basis. The Local Plan piece is only updated every three years. It will be implemented in the 2024-25 school year.

Professional Development is a big part of Ms. Reed's job. She coordinates all SELPA trainings provided throughout the county as well as working with the CAC (Community Advisory Community) representatives to provide trainings for parents and caregivers and involves much collaboration with the Early Childhood Department and the Educational Services Department. In the 2022-23 school year, 148 events were offered. As of January 5, 2024, 75 events have been held. The following Padlet website is a link to their trainings: <https://padlet.com/VCSSELPA/pd-flyers-2023-2024-p5nw4jcxilyuliru>.

The SELPA provides a lot of support and guidance to districts including reviewing their data and working with them to ensure they are providing the services on the IEPs and have compliant IEPs. Ms. Reed facilitates job alike meetings, she meets with speech therapists, school psychologists, and provides support for vision specialists, hard of hearing teachers, and audiologists.

SELPA services include:

Occupational Therapy, Social Emotional Support Specialists, Orientation and Mobility, Physical Therapy, Workability, Deaf/Hard of Hearing Specialists, Adapted PE, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Assistive Technology and Assessment and Residential Consultants. These are contracted with our districts.

Mr. Kidd asked if occupational therapists are considered classified or certificated staff. Ms. Della Gatta said they are classified.

Dr. Flores said the Padlet website is impressive. He asked if home health services are part of SELPA? Ms. Della Gatta indicated the school districts provide the Home Hospital teaching for students. SELPA services may be included if it is on the students' IEP.

Dr. Flores asked about teaming up with Tehama County. Ms. Murphy said is about their area of interest. Veronica Coate's area of interest is dispute resolution. (She is the Assistant Superintendent at TCDE). She was eager to find a program their county could replicate.

Ms. Ulrich asked how the dispute prevention program is going and has the number of families been reduced from going into the legal system. Ms. Murphy said the local support



for families and LEAs is going well. SELPA staff does not receive data from the Office of Administrative Hearing regarding settlement agreements or when a family rescinds SELPA's support. There has been an increase in early resolution and staff is working on being able to quantify. SELPA received 600 phone calls last year.

Mr. Teasdale noted on page 5 – SPED System of Support Collaboration and commented he thinks this is an overview of what the State is trying to do with the grant. He asked what SELPA's role is in using the strategy of the State.

Ms. Murphy indicated CCEE and CDE are trying to cross collaborate together in order to support students; that component has been missing over the last few years. SELPA's area of expertise is special education and we are here to support all of the other initiatives in being able to provide technical assistance as far as professional development.

Through Ms. Salas Brown's office SELPA participates in VALCO (Valley to Coast Collaborative) and Ms. Reed and Mr. Vlahos, go to CCIL (California Coalition for Inclusive Learning). There is a lot of overlap with what is being done with our county supports.

Dr. Lisagor said his sense of the Pathways to Partnership grant with Tehama is essentially demonstrating a proactive approach. Ventura County SELPA is very well known as leaders throughout the State.

#### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Dr. Flores expressed kudos to Dana Thompson and Dr. Julie Judd for their work on the Hackathon by the Sea, and Andrea Rubin for the Academic Decathlon which is being held next week.

Mr. Kidd made an observation from the audit report on how disconcerting declining enrollment is. 16,000 fewer students over a short period of time.

Dr. Lisagor announced an upcoming event – A Home for Education on February 29, 2024 is being held at CSU Channel Islands from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The registration is on the home page of the VCOE website.

#### **M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

##### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Date: Monday, February 26, 2024  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, March 11, 2024  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Friday, April 19, 2024  
Time: 8:00 a.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

Date: Monday, April 22, 2024  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo  
Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board


**N. ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Lisagor adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Date: 2/26/24

  
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Dr. Mark Lisagor, Board President

Date: 2/26/24

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