

**VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF
March 11, 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. 24-03, was called to order by Dr. Mark Lisagor, Board President at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 11, 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
Dr. Mark Lisagor, Area 3
Arleigh Kidd, Area 4
Dr. Ramon Flores, Area 5

Absent: Michael Teasdale, Area 2

VCOE Personnel Present:
Dr. César Morales, County Superintendent of Schools
Misty Key, Deputy Superintendent, Fiscal and Administrative Services
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
Aurelia Roman, Executive Assistant
John Meza, Facilities

3. Approval of Agenda
Dr. Flores moved the Board approve the agenda with the deletion of Item C1, Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 24-03. Ms. Ulrich seconded the motion, and the motion passed 4:0.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

C. HEARINGS

1. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 24-03
Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 24-03 was withdrawn by the parent.

2. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Case No. 24-04
Dr. Flores moved the Board deny Interdistrict Attendance No. 24-04. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and the motion carried upon a unanimous roll call vote (4:0). The decision of the Board is final in this matter.

D. CLOSED SESSION

None

E. PRELIMINARY

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of February 26, 2024.
Mr. Kidd moved the Board to approve the minutes of the Regular Board meeting of February 26, 2024. Dr. Flores seconded the motion and the motion passed (4:0).

F. CORRESPONDENCE

None

G. PRESIDENT’S AND BOARD MEMBERS’ REPORTS.

1. Upcoming Events
VCOE Equity Conference Mar. 12, 2024
805 Industry Day (Moorpark College) Mar. 15, 2024
Migrant Regional Speech Tournament Debate Mar. 23, 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

Dr. Flores attended the CSBA Board Governance Workshop in Sacramento last week. He is chairing the CCBE/CSBA transition committee. The next training is scheduled for September 2024.

Mr. Kidd also attended the CSBA conference in Sacramento. He mentioned that former Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Charles Weis, gave a great presentation on the budget. The sessions were very well done, very similar to when CCBE hosted these workshops.

Dr. Flores noted he was surprised to learn that most counties don’t have budget walk-throughs similar to ours. He expressed appreciation for Ms. Key; this speaks volumes about her and the VCOE staff who prepare Board members for judiciary responsibilities.

Ms. Ulrich is working with local high schools at Oxnard College this weekend. She will be volunteering to help with the Upward Bound program. She will teach sixty Hueneme and Channel Islands High School students anatomy and physiology. Her goal is to help them feel more familiar with the college, work on their goals, and feel comfortable and confident coming to places of higher education.

Dr. Lisagor attended a Providence graduation last week. Staff is making a difference in the lives of students.

Dr. Lisagor attended the Home for Education conference at CSUCI on February 29. Dr. Morales was the Master of Ceremonies, and our county office was very involved. He is looking forward to the Equity Conference tomorrow, March 12, 2024. He also mentioned CSBA advocates are pitching to protect Prop 98 and not introduce more unfunded programs.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Morales indicated the Home for Education on February 29 was a win for our county. Over 300 people registered. It was a collective effort of VCOE, the Ventura County P-20 Council, CSU Channel Islands, the County of Ventura, and the Housing Trust Fund, Ventura County. Follow-up meetings are already taking place.

Dr. Morales was in Washington DC March 5-8, 2024 for an advocacy trip with California County Superintendents. He attended 29 advocacy meetings. Discussions centered around funding, E-Rate, cybersecurity, infrastructure, technology, etc. In discussions about alternative education programs, Ventura County is not only tops in our state but also one of the strongest in the country. Our graduation rates are outstanding. This was a powerful experience with many productive conversations.

Ms. Key gave a Solar update. She said this is something VCOE has been exploring for many years. Mr. Mantooth, former Ventura County Superintendent of Schools attempted to incorporate solar as a part of the CESC project years ago. Perhaps the addition of the Mary Samples building is what we needed to make solar power feasible. The contract with Luminace is a 25-year agreement; the contract language is currently being adjusted related to insurance. This solar project has eight solar arrays, which consist of a carport and a section of parking around the CESC building. When the contract is signed, we will invite Luminace to a Board meeting to share details. Including the DSA process, review, and construction, we have a possible November /December timeline. Dr. Flores requested that the budget and investment details be available when the presentation takes place.

Ms. Key noted the second phase will involve a new section of electric vehicle charging stations. This is an investment in our community. This project will be a property lease and it will require Board action. Luminace is verifying with So. Cal Edison and VCOE hopes to add to the power grid currently being constructed with our neighbors. These charging stations will be Level 3, and they will take up 30 of our existing parking spaces. Luminace would block their reservation system during big events to allow for more parking. The cost is \$90,000 in lease payments annually to use VCOE's parking stalls.

Ms. Ulrich asked if this was a new company. Ms. Key said Luminace is not new in general, but the vehicle charging stations are new for them in California. They were looking for a partner, so the timing is perfect as VCOE has been looking for a solar company. The current charging stations were a partnership between 4-5 entities and a grant that pays VCOE revenue based on use. VCOE was searching for vendors where the money comes to us, not going out.

Ms. Ulrich asked if we are paid based on usage. Ms. Key said it is a flat rate. Luminace was looking for a place for fleets to be charged overnight. Since VCOE isn't open at night or on weekends, the business opportunity was viable for them.

Mr. Kidd thanked Ms. Key for the information and the work staff had done.

At the February 26th Board meeting, a manufacturing update was requested. Anthony Marengo, our CEC Director will give a manufacturing program update at the May 3rd Budget Study session as well as updates on many other programs at the CEC.

I. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

None

J. CONSENT/ACTION ITEMS

1. Temporary County Certificates

Ms. Ulrich moved the Board approve Consent Item J1. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and the motion passed (4:0).

K. PRESENTATIONS

None.

L. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION/ACTION

1. Vista Real Charter High School Programmatic Audit

On May 25, 2005, the Ventura County Board of Education approved the charter petition for Vista Real Charter High School (VRCHS). On April 27, 2020, VRCHS was Board approved for renewal through June 30, 2028. In accordance with the VCOE Charter School Progress Report Timeline, representatives from VRCHS will present information required in the annual programmatic audit detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding which includes provisions for the LCAP.

Ms. Marlo Hartsuyker, Director Charter School Support informed the Board that Corrine Manley, Area Superintendent of Vista Real Charter High School isn't able to attend the meeting due to illness. The two principals Jonathan Oates and Cece Dullam along with Guita Sharifi, CFO at Lifelong Learning will be presenting. She also reminded Board members that charter schools continue to align with the whole child resource map.

Ms. Dullam said the current enrollment of Vista Real Charter High School is 1375. Enrollment is steady, but not back to pre-pandemic levels. On average, students are approximately 17+ years old and are behind on credits. VRCHS is a DASS school (Dashboard Alternative School Status). CDE determines DASS eligibility based on student groups, with at least 70% of total enrollment needing to be unduplicated student count. VRCHS qualifies with 78%.

The 2022-23 one-year graduation rate was 76%. Sixty-six percent of the total student enrollment continued at VRCHS and 24% matriculated back to a local high school. Thirty-six percent went on to a two-year college.

Data shows 29.75% of students met or exceeded the standard for ELA. Because of the nature of students, VRCHS does not have students for multiple years, the data collected is NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association). Students took reading assessments in the spring and fall and there is growth. Lexile growth may not have increased by grade level, but they have increased Lexile level. This is the same with the math assessment.

In Differentiated Assistance, the CSSS (California Statewide System of Support) goal is to assist students based on inequity in student groups. Since VRCHS is authorized with VCOE, they are partnering with Kern COE to address and identify how to better serve these student groups.

Mr. Oates presented the types of academic interventions VRCHS is doing to bolster student outcomes. In the area of Career Education, students attend classes offered at the Career Education Center. A partnership with the Oxnard Fire Department is in the works. Students are engaged in college field trips, Esports, and even took a trip to Las Vegas to work on a CSI murder case.

School safety is a high priority. Staff is attending the VCOE safety training series which has been very informative and has motivated the administration to take a closer look at crisis communications, both inward and outward. Active shooter and lockdown trainings occur, and staff attended a four-hour behavior threat assessment training. VRCHS is partnering with local law enforcement who are presenting information on gang and drug prevention /awareness. Vape sensors are being installed in student restrooms. Brivo door security systems have been installed at most sites.

In the area of student wellness, the centers are active and programs are connecting with youth. Counseling services in different areas such as social/emotional health and academics are provided.

Ms. Sharifi provided Board members with information on budget projections, operating expenses, and changes in the budget.

Dr. Lisagor inquired about capital expenses in Ventura and Santa Paula. Mr. Oates said they have purchased a building in Santa Paula. There is a place in Ventura where the El Torito restaurant was years ago; they are trying to turn it into a learning center.

Ms. Ulrich asked when a charter school purchases land, who owns that land? Ms. Hartsuyker noted that assets from public funds are owned by the public. If VRCHS were not to exist, it would be liquidated and given to other entities – other schools.

Ms. Ulrich asked what contracted services from Scholastic Education Resources and Sequoia Administrative Resources provide. Ms. Dullam said these two entities do a lot of work. They are the same entities that provide services because VRCHS is a Learn for Life School. They provide information to the VRCHS Board on their services and vendor comparisons are provided. Sequoia provides back-office financial services and human capital management for all human resources-related items. They help with Board training and facilitation, facility services, and long-term strategic planning.

Scholastic Education Resources works with schools to develop the LCAP, look at curriculum and assessment, handle information technology, and work with accreditation, marketing, and student outreach.

Ms. Ulrich asked if there were any ties to these companies. Ms. Dullam replied no and the VRCHS Board's goal is to keep VRCHS as an autonomous structure.

Dr. Flores asked where Scholastic and Sequoia are headquartered. Ms. Sharifi said they are both located in Lancaster, California. Administration services are 5% and education is 10%. VRCHS just finished an audit, and it is important what percentage non-profits spend on programs versus administration. VRCHS spends more than 90% on program services.

Mr. Ulrich inquired why oversight fees are projected to increase by 19%. Ms. Sharifi said it is for enrichment programs for school districts. School districts are increasing their fees.

Mr. Kidd referred to slide 4 and asked about the attendance numbers of students coming from all over the county. Some of the enrollment numbers are high for the populations of the cities.

Ms. Dullam said the majority of students from over the Conejo grade tend to go to the Simi Valley Learning Center. They have looked at enrollment at all six sites and there is some overlap. For example, there are parents in Oxnard who want their kids in Camarillo. There are some parent choices based on needs. Mr. Oates also said parents may live in one area, but work in another.

Mr. Oates went over the program highlights which included the wellness centers (which they hope to expand), PLC commitment and increased time for Professional Learning Teams, field trips, successful summer enrichment programs, schoolwide diversity, the equity and inclusion team, EL student academic growth, piloting eSports and expanded on-site CTE offerings.

Dr. Flores referred to slide 8 and inquired about the 24% of students who matriculated back to high school. Mr. Oates said this is based on a relationship between schools. The Registrars communicate with each other and ensure the student is where they say they are.

Dr. Flores also referred to slide 9 and asked if there is data on what students are majoring in. Mr. Oates will research.

Dr. Flores inquired about cybersecurity. Mr. Oates said VRCHS has hotspots and is looking into cybersecurity. They are looking at AI as a tool instead of a hindrance to finding out where students are and tracking their IP addresses.

Dr. Lisagor thanked the VRCHS for their presentation.

2. Second Interim Budget Report

Ms. Key thanked Lisa Cline, Executive Director, Internal Business Services, and her staff for the Second Interim Budget information.

VCOE made a settlement agreement with the Federation in December, which gave the same increase to all employees. This was a second interim 4% increase ongoing to salaries and a 4% off-schedule one-time payment.

Ms. Key mentioned there is a significant increase in deficit spending. On page 2, she mentioned SELPA has a new Alternative Dispute Grant; our SELPA is the designated leader for the state. The grant is \$2 million annually for five years, however, CDE has awarded another \$2 million across the state. The funds are cycled through our books, and we are doing the training for the state. VCOE is partnering with Tehama COE to accomplish this work. There are many projects in the planning for this grant work.

One and a half million has been allocated to district and charter schools for out-of-home care.

The Literacy Grant allocated to Triton is \$250,000; a TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment) has been hired to increase literacy and reading skills. These are one-time grant dollars we are hoping to stretch across two to three school years.

On page 3 the deficit spending is increased by \$7 million compared to the First Interim. Overall, the deficit spending is about 15 million. Page 8 indicates VCOE has adequate cash to pay bills every month.

Page 31 is a summary of the General Fund. The First Interim was approximately 132 million. With the adjustments, the total revenue is now about the same, 131.9 million.

Expenditure adjustments have been made at the Second Interim. This is a little more than \$3 million, which is a reflection of the agreement with the Federation and the rest of the employees.

One of the large projects is the Welding shop at CEC. This project should be completed by this fiscal year which reflects a \$2 million expenditure in the current year. There are other projects in the works where money has been carried over and they are now being completed.

VCOE is investing in technology infrastructure and ongoing efforts for cybersecurity. Equipment is being purchased in the main data center and the backup center.

Dr. Flores asked if Technology has a refresh plan. Ms. Key said this is one of the things being worked on – there is a replacement plan for all types of technology devices. \$250,000 is spent on employee devices – a four-year refreshment plan, the same plan for student devices. This plan was put into place during COVID. A printer replacement plan is also in the works. Technology spending also includes infrastructure, WI-FI access points, behind-the-scenes servers, and a refreshment plan connected to an E-Rate cycle. VCOE has two data centers to run applications, and the data itself is replicated in four other places.

Ms. Ulrich asked when VCOE is in deficit spending, every year the fund balance gets a little less, at what point do you foresee it leveling out?

Ms. Key said when we have to reduce expenditures, we reduce salaries and positions we can't afford to pay for. It has nothing to do with the quality of work or service performed, it has to do with reducing services in schools that are not needed based on the enrollment of students in our programs. We are looking at layoffs in our programs right now. The program transfer to Pleasant Valley School District is a reduction of nine classrooms – PVSD will serve students directly. The transition is tough. There are also four classrooms collapsing due to low enrollment. Sunkist School is down to two classes and is transitioning down to one, and the district will take over the program. Overall, there are 13 fewer classrooms which results in 80 fewer positions.

Dr. Flores asked if other districts have similar salaries. Ms. Key said our employees who transfer will retain their seniority when entering into the PVSD system. Their salaries should be similar.

Ms. Ulrich noted that VCOE is decreasing the number of staff, but they will likely be employed in other districts. Ms. Key agreed and said there are many SPED jobs available.

Page 73 shows the projected year total of \$28 million. 2024-25 is projected down to \$18 million and the third year, \$10 million. We are financially solvent for the next few years.

Mr. Kidd asked Ms. Key if conversations are increasing with CBOs considering the county's fiscal oversight with districts and the declining enrollment.

Ms. Key said she watches this carefully. Districts in general are very similar, they have fund balances they are spending. They are sitting on COVID dollars, which are hard to spend; it takes time and effort to spend appropriately. Overall school districts have one more year of reaction time before the large cuts are apparent. We haven't yet seen the layoffs we would expect with declining enrollment because they are spending their deficit spending.

Mr. Kidd made a motion to acknowledge the Second Interim Budget based on the Superintendent's Positive Certification. Dr. Flores seconded the motion and it passed 4:0.

3. Transportation Plan

The State Budget Act of 2022, added Education Code Section 39800.1, requiring a plan describing the transportation services for pupils. The plan shall be adopted by the local education agency's governing board on or before April 1, 2024, and updated by April 1 each subsequent year. VCOE staff have prepared the transportation plan adhering to the new code section.

Dr. Flores moved to approve the Transportation Plan as presented. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and it passed 4:0.

4. Approval of Revisions and Additions to Board Policies

To ensure compliance with all programs and policies within VCOE Schools and Programs, the following board bylaws have been revised or added to our VCOE Board Policies. All policies have been updated to reflect current CSBA suggested language and existing laws. The Board may choose to waive the second reading and approve the revisions/additions as presented.

Ms. Ulrich requested to table this agenda item until Mr. Teasdale can be present as these policies pertain to our own Board. She also noticed some of the policies coming from the CSBA Gamut as it pertains to Board education and accountability reflect CCBE being in existence. Dr. Lisagor suggested identifying policies that are straightforward and reviewing those.

Ms. Key appreciates the Board wanting to move slowly to understand the policies. Staff will search and make sure CCBE is not listed in the policies. These policies pick up from

where we left off last fall. This is the next series and there are a few policies that are relevant to trustees in the process of elections such as a runoff election should there be a tie vote. The policy we turned in shows if there were ever a tie, that we, per this resolution, would have to do another election. Elections costs are between \$200,000 and \$500,000. Board Policy 9220 is important to do well in advance as there is a filing system that has to happen with the county elections office. The options are to hold an election or do “by lot” which is basically putting two names in a hat and picking one.

Dr. Lisagor said the cost of an election is sobering. He asked the Board their thoughts on tabling all of the policies or getting through some of them.

Ms. Ulrich asked if tabling these policies until the April meeting would make a difference in elections and filling Board member vacancies.

Ms. Key said they are fine to delay. Most of the changes are updating language and there is a complete change in the numbering structure to align with CSBA. Nancy Akkerman has been working to help update the board policies.

Dr. Morales noted Dr. Lisagor will not be at the Board meetings in April and asked if he would be okay with not being in attendance for the Board policy conversations. Dr. Lisagor stated yes, that it would be fine to address the board policies in his absence.

Ms. Ulrich said since Trustee Teasdale is our county state representative, we should have him present for these and table all of them. Dr. Flores said since Trustee Teasdale is our delegate at large, in respect to him, he agrees.

The following policies were tabled until the April 22, 2024 Board meeting.

- a. New – BP 9220 Governing Board Elections (First reading only)
Delete – BP 9210 Membership Comprehensive Safety Plan
- b. New – BP 9222 Resignation
- c. New – BP 9223 Filling Vacancies
- d. New – BP 9224 Oath or Affirmation
- e. Revisions – BP 9230 Orientation
- f. New – BP 9240 Board Training
- g. New – BP 9310 Board Policies (New and Renumbered)
Delete – BP 9300 Development of Policies and Procedures
Delete – AR 9300 Development of Policies and Procedures
Delete – AR 9314 Suspension of Policies
- h. New – BP 9400 Board Self Evaluation
Delete – current BP 9400, Accountability, Review and Evaluation
- i. Renumber BP 2126 to BP 9500 County Superintendent’s Remuneration

M. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None

N. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. MATES Charter School Programmatic Audit - April 22, 2024

O. FUTURE MEETINGS

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

Date: Friday, May 3, 2024
 Time: 8:00 a.m.
 Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
 Purpose: Budget Study Session

Date: Monday, May 20, 2024
 Time: 6:00 p.m.
 Location: 5100 Adolfo Road, Board Room, Camarillo
 Purpose: Regular Meeting of the Board

P. ADJOURNMENT

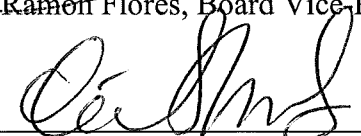
Dr. Lisagor adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Date: 4/22/2024



 Dr. Ramon Flores, Board Vice-President

Date: 4/23/2024



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