MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: September 16, 2020
Meeting Location: Held Remotely
Board Members Present: Susan Alvaro, Hector Camacho, Jr., Jim Cannon, Beverly Gerard, Rod Hsiao, Ted Lempert, Joe Ross
Staff Officials Present: Nancy Magee, Secretary
Jennifer Perna, Executive Assistant
Other Staff Present: Claire Cunningham, Jennifer Frentress, Patricia Love, Lori Musso, Denise Porterfield

1. OPENING ITEMS

A. Call to Order

Board President Hector Camacho, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He announced the County Board was conducting the meeting as a webinar in light of the current health emergency and the Governor’s March 17, 2020, Executive Order N-29-20 suspending certain provisions of the Brown Act to allow governing boards to conduct meetings through remote access. Board President Camacho also noted in the effort to increase accessibility and opportunity for community engagement, simultaneous interpretation of the meeting was being implemented in Spanish using Zoom technology through the end of Public Comment, and would continue further into the meeting if people were utilizing the channel.

B. Approval of Agenda

Prior to a motion to approve the agenda, Board President Camacho pointed out two adjustments to the agenda as presented in the original Board packet. The first change was that the title of Item 6.A. was incorrectly listed as “Discuss/Act on the Learning and Continuity Plan for SMCOE’s Court and Community Schools,” and was corrected to “Discuss/Act on the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for SMCOE’s Court and Community Schools.” The second change was that Deputy Superintendent Littrell was listed as being available to answer questions for various items on the agenda, but she was called away on a family emergency and was not present. With those information items shared, Board President Camacho then asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda.

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Cannon, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the September 16, 2020, agenda as amended.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Superintendent Magee indicated there was a public comment submitted in advance of the meeting specifically related to item 8.C., Receive Update and Housing Recommendations from YMCA Housing Subcommittee, which would be addressed during discussion of that agenda item.

There were no additional persons wishing to address the Board.

3. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

   A. September 2020 Employee of the Month, Anne Ton, Public Communications Specialist, Office of the Superintendent

Board President Camacho recognized the September 2020 Employee of the Month, Anne Ton, Public Communications Specialist, Office of the Superintendent. Board President Camacho congratulated Ms. Ton on behalf of the Board and noted she would receive her check and commemorative token.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   A. September 2, 2020, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Ms. Alvaro, and a second by Mr. Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Minutes of the September 2, 2020, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

   B. Receive Staffing Reports
   C. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 20-59 Recognizing October 2, 2020, as International Walk to School Day
   D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 20-60 Recognizing October 2020 as RESPECT! 24/7 Month in San Mateo County
   E. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 20-61 Recognizing October 2020 as LGBTQ+ History Month
   F. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 20-62 Committing to Work toward Environmental Sustainability

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Consent Agenda.
6. **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION**

A. **Discuss/Act on the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools**

Superintendent Magee introduced Karen Gnusti, Executive Director, College, Career, and Secondary Education, who began by outlining the sections of the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- In-Person Instructional Offerings
- Distance Learning Program
- Pupil Learning Loss
- Mental Health & Social Emotional Well-Being
- School Nutrition
- Increased Services

Executive Director Gnusti described how the Plan had been revised since the Board’s first reading noting that some additional descriptors had been added as well as funding amounts added into the supplemental and concentration budget columns. She went on to discuss how progress monitoring for the school year would include student, family, and staff surveys, grades, credits, formative assessments, attendance, participation, and student engagement.

Lastly, Executive Director Gnusti described the upcoming process noting important dates, per the California Department of Education (CDE):

- 9/16/20 – request to San Mateo County Board of Education to adopt the Plan
- Within five days of the adoption, submit plan to CDE for review
- Once returned, and within 15 days of receipt of recommendations from CDE, San Mateo County Board of Education shall consider the recommendations
- By 12/15/20 – San Mateo County Board of Education to adopt a budget overview for parents

Board President Camacho thanked Executive Director Gnusti for the information.

Ms. Alvaro thanked Executive Director Gnusti for providing the redline version of the changes. She asked about Executive Director Gnusti’s statements at the previous Board meeting that there was no data for summer school because it had never been done before, but Ms. Alvaro recalled that summer school had been implemented in the past. Superintendent Magee confirmed that summer school is always provided in the Court Schools, but that summer school had not been offered at Gateway for a number of years. She also noted that at one time, Ms. Alvaro was correct in stating that summer school had been implemented in the past.

Mr. Hsiao thanked Executive Director Gnusti for the presentation and expressed appreciation for the changes made in response to his concerns. He stated no other changes were needed but asked...
or clarification on how students would be graded going forward. He noted that Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) played a big role previously, but now it seems there are other components. Mr. Hsiao referenced the daily interaction log that tracks participation and engagement and asked how the log translates into letter grades for students.

Executive Director Gnusti shared she has been part of many conversations, both in the Court and Community Schools and across the county, surrounding this question, but at the core is the balance between making sure students have the skills to move on in their classes and assigning a meaningful letter grade. Executive Director Gnusti said teachers are taking student engagement into account and working to apply it to how students earn credits.

Mr. Hsiao commented that students and parents want transparency around whatever approach is adopted. He described not wanting students to argue their grades after the fact and wondered if the grading system can be made clear early in the semester and allow for student feedback about how they are being evaluated. Executive Director Gnusti said this questioning can be added to student surveys and conversations.

Mr. Hsiao asked if Court School students are at home at this time. Superintendent Magee confirmed that Gateway students are currently in distance learning at home and Court School students are in the juvenile justice setting, learning via distance learning.

Superintendent Magee described how one classroom opened for in-person learning the previous week at the Anne Campbell Center for Children and Families, with an additional classroom opening this week. The next step is to return students to in-person learning in the Court and Community setting. Mr. Hsiao asked if Hillcrest does not have to apply for a waiver because there are so few students and enough space. Superintendent Magee confirmed this is the understanding. She noted that Marin County has fully operationalized their Court and Community Schools under the small-setting guidance, and SMCOE is looking to follow their lead. Executive Director Gnusti added that probation partners are supporting students in distance learning, bringing small groups of students to specific locations to access computers with teachers in classrooms down the hall. Mr. Hsiao thanked Superintendent Magee for the update.

Board President Camacho commented on how SMCOE is available as a resource to provide feedback to districts, and asked whether the state provides that level of support for county offices. Executive Director Gnusti replied that SMCOE has the same access to resources as districts and her team has been working with the Systems for District Improvement group. She said she attends the same meetings as a district representative from SMCOE, listening, taking notes, and discussing. Executive Director Gnusti added CDE provides guidance through question and answer sessions, as well as hotlines, but they do not directly support SMCOE.

After a motion by Mr. Cannon and a second by Mr. Hsiao, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for SMCOE's Court and Community Schools.
7. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Superintendent’s Comments

Superintendent Magee began by sharing how engaging, informative, and interesting she found the California County Board of Education (CCBE) Conference. Superintendent Magee said Mr. Ross did a wonderful job interviewing Eric Yuan, CEO and founder of Zoom Video Communications. She also congratulated Ms. Gerard on a successful conference.

Superintendent Magee said the following day SMCOE would be hosting the annual Vulnerable Students Symposium, to focus on homelessness and its impact on schools, as a result of COVID-19. She shared the keynote speaker is Matt Reddam from Butte County, a highly respected trainer on trauma-informed practices for students, who will apply the trauma-informed lens to students experiencing homelessness. She congratulated Executive Director McGrath and Associate Superintendent Frentress for partnering on this session.

Superintendent Magee called attention to the resolutions on the night’s Board agenda and said she is proud that despite working in a virtual environment, SMCOE is still convening important sessions, including the annual Respect! 24/7 Conference in October and the Future of History event focusing on how to strengthen and support students who are LGBTQ+ in classrooms. Superintendent Magee also emphasized the especially profound environmental sustainability resolution and the call for actions happening globally on September 25 and 26, the latter being World Environmental Health Day. She discussed how SMCOE is strategizing how to move conversations forward in the environmental sustainability space, not only in providing high quality environmental education for students, but also working with policymakers to ensure healthy and safe school facilities for students in California. Superintendent Magee explained the expected rash of wildfires each year, smoke days, power outages, and now COVID-19, truly illustrate the need for this. She expressed a desire to push legislators and policymakers to think about what investments should be made in school facilities to ensure school building environments provide the best possible learning opportunities for students.

Superintendent Magee reported on the COVID-19 status in San Mateo County, noting the county is currently in the most restrictive purple tier. It is possible, as San Mateo County is making progress on its positive case rate, that next Tuesday the county may be moved to the red tier, the second most restrictive tier. If San Mateo County can maintain the metric required to stay in the red tier for 14 consecutive days, school districts would be able to begin planning and implementing modified, hybrid operations for in-person learning without a waiver.

Superintendent Magee emphasized it was unlikely that high schools would return to in-person learning until the metrics have improved in additional ways, because maintaining six feet of physical distance is much more complicated on a high school campus. She noted that Jefferson Union High School District and Sequoia Union High School District were due to take action to pursue distance learning for another quarter and San Mateo Union High School District has committed to distance learning through December.

Superintendent Magee shared that two public school districts submitted waiver applications for in-person learning and are currently in the approval process. She summarized there are still lots of
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

challenges to overcome, but there is movement towards getting back to in-person learning. The process should be strategic and incremental in order to ensure the safest of conditions.

Board President Camacho stated he might speak directly with Superintendent Magee after the meeting, to share comments and questions that might be helpful in next conversations.

8. BOARD MEMBERS

A. Third Reading and Potential Action on New Board Policy 0470 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

Superintendent Magee highlighted the only addition to the draft from the previous version is the inclusion of language addressing Mr. Hsiao’s interest in further highlighting the importance of student engagement connected to high quality learning.

Mr. Hsiao thanked Superintendent Magee for making the change. He underscored his original point of allowing for asynchronous learning to the extent considered best instructional practice. Superintendent Magee agreed and added that there are other sections of the policy which address asynchronous learning, including how the day is structured in relation to the instructional minutes.

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Cannon, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved new Board Policy 0470 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.

B. Second Reading and Potential Action on Updated Board Policy 5030 on Student Wellness

Superintendent Magee pointed out there were only two minor changes from the previous draft. She emphasized how SMCOE is working hard to ensure all policy language uses non-binary pronouns so two instances of “he/she” were replaced with the preferred non-binary pronoun “they.” Otherwise, the policy is the same as the previous version.

After a motion by Mr. Hsiao and a second by Ms. Gerard, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved updated Board Policy 5030 on Student Wellness.

C. Receive Update and Housing Recommendations from YMCA Housing Subcommittee

Superintendent Magee welcomed Rachel Del Monte, District Vice-President, YMCA of San Francisco, and Chris McComic, Vice-President of Property Development, YMCA of San Francisco. She commented on the strong, long-term relationship between SMCOE and the YMCA, especially under the leadership of Ms. Del Monte, who has done a fantastic job building a collaborative space for the Board and Superintendent to do this important work. Superintendent Magee described how the YMCA Housing Subcommittee met a year ago to hear proposals for three potential site locations for new SMCOE staff housing at Camp Jones Gulch, followed by a site visit led by Mark Nolan, Director, Outdoor Education, and attended by Board Member Cannon. She explained the YMCA
Housing Subcommittee then met again and made a housing site recommendation, based on all the data that was presented between November and February. Superintendent Magee stated Ms. Del Monte and Mr. McComic would provide a presentation on the recommended site location.

Superintendent Magee added there was public comment submitted in writing from Director Nolan related to this agenda item, which had already been shared with the Board. Board President Camacho asked that the public comment be read for members of the public after the presentation. Chief Deputy County Counsel indicated there was also a hand raised requesting to provide public comment. Board President Camacho confirmed it was okay to share all public comments after the presentation.

Ms. Del Monte began by discussing the shared plan to build two houses to serve as resident housing for SMCOE’s Outdoor Education Principal and Director over the next eight months. She informed she would be explaining the financing structure as well as the relationship between the YMCA and SMCOE, as agreed upon in their 25-year agreement.

Mr. McComic thanked Superintendent Magee, Deputy Superintendent Porterfield, Ms. Alvaro, Mr. Hsiao, and Mr. Cannon for their insight, assistance, and collaboration moving forward with this project. He discussed in detail the site location believed to be best suited for the new housing units, located near the water treatment plant, the straw hut, and areas of student learning. Mr. McComic highlighted the in-progress schematic site plan, designed with the potential for three housing units. He indicated his staff has been working hard with subcontractors to begin providing proposals for water, utilities, and a secondary septic system.

Mr. McComic presented an example of a premanufactured home being considered and the process in seeking a competitive price. He explained how newly built homes in this area must be wildland urban interface (WUI) compliant due to fire restrictions and how all premanufactured homes are designed accordingly. Mr. McComic discussed adding a front porch to the homes and building one home to be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. He highlighted a typical 1200 square foot floorplan. He has also looked at larger homes of 1600 square feet and noted they may actually come in at a lower price point. Mr. McComic indicated the homes are built completely turn-key and ready for move in.

Mr. McComic presented a preliminary project budget based on communication with standard subcontractors, explaining how the WUI compliance includes sprinklers and additional fire protection. The budget outlined the following costs, including 10% contingency costs:

- Fire road
- Septic system
- Water tank
- Housing site prep
- Houses (2)

Mr. McComic again emphasized this is only a preliminary budget, and he hopes to obtain multiple subcontractor bids and proposals the following Friday. He pointed out how the YMCA shared portion would be 2/3 of the total cost, and the SMCOE shared portion would be 1/3 of the total cost.
Board President Camacho invited public comments to be shared at this time. Superintendent Magee asked if Director Nolan would prefer speaking about his public comment rather than having his written comments read aloud. Director Nolan explained that he and his staff are supportive of this project, but from his point of view, the location is problematic for several reasons. Superintendent Magee shared Director Nolan’s seven concerns, with Director Nolan interjecting additional information:

- The proposed site is a critical hiking and teaching area for students
- The proposed site greatly expands the footprint of the camp facilities instead of incorporating the buildings into the existing camp footprint
- The proposed site significantly increases vehicle traffic especially at night and the access road is essential for student night hikes due to the hilly terrain and lack of adequate nighttime hiking trail
- The proposed site may have potential impact on endangered species – including the endangered Marbled Murrelets nesting in nearby Valley of the Giants
- Is there a potential for landslides during wet winters?
- Requires administrators to drive 5-10 minutes to cabins and dining hall to respond to nighttime student emergencies
- The site is isolated from other Camp Jones Gulch and Outdoor Education staff housing, limiting social interaction, especially for the staff’s children

There were two additional public comments:

- Alex Jones, University of California Santa Cruz Campus Natural Reserve Manager, agreed with Director Nolan’s points
- Emily Roberts, Naturalist living at Jones Gulch, reiterated Mr. Jones’ comments

Mr. Hsiao thanked Ms. Del Monte and Mr. McComic for their presentation. He stated he is excited about the project, but he was perplexed why Director Nolan did not attend the last YMCA Housing Subcommittee to voice his concerns at that time. Mr. Hsiao said he understands the financial impact from an engineering and infrastructure perspective, but the ball was dropped in terms of process, with program staff not providing their input, and this was a gap in stakeholder input. He emphasized the importance of social interactions and cohesion among staff and their children, as well as the importance of student safety and staff responding quickly to emergencies, made difficult as the location requires a 5-10 minute drive to the cabins. Mr. Hsiao inquired if an environmental impact report (EIR) would be necessary to conduct a wildlife preservation study to protect and preserve the Marbled Murrelets. He summarized he was ready to approve the recommendations, but now he feels the additional factors must be considered.

Ms. Alvaro thanked Mr. Jones and Ms. Roberts for their input, and Mr. Nolan for bringing up his points. She shared that her son worked at Mountain Camp, a mating and nesting site for the Marbled Murrelets, with staff and the public trained to do counts, but the site has since burned to the ground. Ms. Alvaro stated she did not realize the Coyote area was a nesting site, and she anticipates it will be a busy nesting site this year. She indicated this is a big concern and park rangers, University of California staff, and naturalists who work with the Marbled Murrelets must be engaged to answer
questions and provide information on how damaging it will be to use the proposed site for housing. Ms. Alvaro discussed erosion concerns for the hillside this year with all that was cleared out by the fires, and she suggested a geotechnical survey might be in order, which she didn’t recall being discussed previously. She shared the realization over the last few months that there must be clear defensible space around the proposed site.

Ms. Gerard stated she was not in any pre-conversations and had a question about other considered sites, but when she read Mr. Nolan’s comments, she became concerned about the site chosen for the above-mentioned reasons. She expressed feeling that additional discussion is needed to address these important, unanswered questions and concerns.

Mr. Cannon shared when the camp site was visited in December, these issues were discussed, so this is not the first time these issues were being considered. He stated he is unsure of the best decision, but emphasized again these issues have not been ignored in the deliberations.

Superintendent Magee indicated that Mr. Nolan was part of the initial meeting where plans were laid out and three sites were considered, and he was part of extensive conversations during the onsite tour. She explained the YMCA Housing Subcommittee met after the onsite tour with full knowledge of Mr. Nolan’s concerns and that the recommended site was not his top choice. The subcommittee, after considering all data and input, selected this particular site. Superintendent Magee shared when the YMCA Housing Subcommittee last met to discuss next steps, the site decision had already been made in January, allowing the YMCA to move forward with some preliminary analysis. Superintendent Magee assured the Board members that more research could be done, but the decision-making process had been fairly extensive with a great deal of data shared and lots of conversation.

Board President Camacho thanked Superintendent Magee for the additional context.

Ms. Alvaro confirmed that Superintendent Magee was correct, adding the main consideration was cost and the recommended site already had water and utilities, while other sites did not have water and utilities, and the costs would be exorbitant. She assured the YMCA Housing Subcommittee was working to be good stewards of the financial resources.

One additional concern she has is related to providing alternative trails so students may enjoy their night hike without having to be on the road with cars. She felt this issue could be worked around. Another concern was the site not looking like a suburban enclave in the middle of Outdoor Education, with the students having to hike through somebody’s neighborhood. She hoped the hikes could be moved to avoid going through the neighborhood, and there were also workarounds for this issue. Ms. Alvaro stated she was not aware of the Marbled Murrelets issue until she received Mr. Nolan’s memo, and although the issue is not a deal-breaker, she would like more information.

Ms. Del Monte assured these plans have been run by the YMCA’s conservation partner Sempervirens Fund, with whom they have just entered into a conservation easement. She continued that Sempervirens Fund has no concerns about the Marbled Murrelets nor the location of the homes and their environmental impact. Ms. Del Monte said the YMCA worked closely with their architect who has the topographic maps for all of the YMCA’s 930 acres and did not see any issues related to the
Board of Education Meeting
September 16, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

hillside. Ms. Alvaro indicated it was good to know this and thanked Ms. Del Monte for the information. She emphasized that this location is a flat space and close to utilities, and the YMCA believes this remains a good choice. Ms. Alvaro responded the YMCA Housing Subcommittee heard loud and clear that if SMCOE chose not to do housing in this area, something else might be built there anyway. Ms. Del Monte clarified there are currently no plans for this, but confirmed this possibility. Ms. Alvaro asked how prohibitive it would be to have a naturalist, possibly out of University of California Santa Cruz, to ease the Board’s mind related to the Marbled Murrelets’ nesting ground. Ms. Del Monte responded the YMCA is working with Laura McLendon from the Sempervirens Fund, who is one of the leading Marbled Murrelet experts in the area, and she would be happy to ask Ms. McLendon to work with SMCOE, especially in light of the most recent fires. Ms. Alvaro stated this was good to know.

Mr. McComic seconded that Ms. McLendon was the perfect person to help understand any necessary mitigation associated with Marbled Murrelets. He added that both geotechnical and civil engineers would be involved in site design aspects to address concerns throughout the process. Mr. McComic stated the other two sites would be quite expensive to develop, and though not impossible, cost is a factor. Mr. McComic explained he would be happy to have engineers provide reports, and he feels there are ways to circumvent the hiking and landscape issues. He summarized that the main concern is cost and this site is the most economical and best choice.

Mr. Cannon recalled discussions in December regarding staff/administrator housing and there being a difference in opinion regarding the desirability of being down below versus up above. He noted the conclusion from some was that the upper site was better for families, and that might be something to consider.

Board President Camacho referred to the contingency costs built into the budget and asked Mr. McComic from his experience in construction management, how often the contingency dollars are used. Mr. McComic replied that on a ground-up project that is priced correctly, there is less likelihood of using the contingency dollars, but it needs to be there for unexpected costs. In a remodel, such as upgrading cabins, there is a greater chance of needing contingency funds. Board President Camacho stated this information was helpful. He then asked about the ADA compliance and why both homes are not planned to be ADA compliant. Mr. McComic replied now is the time, in the conceptual design phase, to make the decision to build both homes with ADA accessibility. He said there are costs associated with these factors, but those costs could easily be added.

Board President Camacho discussed attending Outdoor Education as a student and counselor and the lessons he learned, including consideration for others, which includes individuals, the environment, place, and space. He recalled a rained out session in the classroom where counselors talked to students about the Lantos tunnels and the environmental impacts and debates regarding building in nature. Board President Camacho described that Mr. Nolan and the naturalists could lead a similar discussion about the responsibility and role of individuals in the stewardship of land. He stated he was not sure how comfortable he would feel about that lesson and whether this site choice is consistent with what should be taught to students. Board President Camacho expressed he was unsure how to reconcile the lessons being taught to fifth grade students vs. lower costs and fiduciary responsibilities. Board President Camacho asked about the timeline and concerns about the rainy
Board of Education Meeting
September 16, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

season, and whether the Board had to quickly make a decision or if obtaining additional information could ensure the curriculum being delivered was consistent with the actions being taken.

Ms. Gerard agreed with Board President Camacho, stating she was uncomfortable with the unanswered questions. She spoke about her three children attending Outdoor Education and the special experience they had. Board President Camacho asked for feedback on how to address the questions posed and for a pathway moving forward.

Superintendent Magee agreed these are good questions for the entire Board, and reiterated how the YMCA Housing Subcommittee had discussed these issues. She explained the YMCA had a deadline in January to make a determination of which site would be best for investment, and based upon the YMCA Housing Subcommittee’s decision, the YMCA had preliminarily moved forward. Superintendent Magee also explained how Outdoor Education is on pause this year due to COVID-19 so the timeline is not about the rainy season, but about the pause on student programming allowing the project to be completed in a timely manner without impacting student programming.

She acknowledged Director Nolan and his team for their leadership in building a program with great integrity and reputation. At the same time, looking ahead, Outdoor Education must attract a Director and Principal because Director Nolan and Principal Van Zandt will be retiring at some point. Superintendent Magee added that having this project completed prior to that recruitment is an important consideration. Superintendent Magee stated she believes the questions generated from these discussions can be answered and suggested taking a step back to focus on Director Nolan’s questions using the expertise of Laura McLendon from the Sempervirens Fund and the architect.

Superintendent Magee summarized that time could be taken to gather additional information to bring back to the full Board at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Alvaro agreed that trying to build the housing while Outdoor Education is on pause is the ideal scenario, as the disruption would otherwise be enormous with construction vehicles and concrete trucks. She apologized to Director Nolan that he was not in attendance at the last meeting. Ms. Alvaro shared that the YMCA Housing Subcommittee analyzed alternative sites, and that she initially lobbied for a different site, but changed her mind and agreed that the chosen site was better. She emphasized that SMCOE is lucky as the current Director lives in LaHonda and the Assistant Director lives just south of the camp, but a new hire will not find a place to live in LaHonda or south of the camp. Ms. Alvaro suggested adding this item to the next meeting agenda and in the meantime consulting with Laura McLendon from the Sempervirens Fund. Ms. Alvaro requested preliminary thoughts on the workarounds for the hiking trails, and ensuring student safety with vehicles on the road, issues which have always been her biggest concern.

Ms. Gerard referred to the YMCA Housing Subcommittee making this decision in January, but the other four Board members hearing about their decision now, at the end of September. She shared understanding there was the issue of COVID-19, but she would have preferred to have this information earlier so some of the concerns could have been addressed. Ms. Gerard stated the other Board members were not updated in January, in February, or even in March, and she has an issue with that. She would have liked to have known that a choice was made before now.
BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board President Camacho indicated that Ms. Alvaro’s suggestion might be helpful. He recognized that he trusts his colleagues to have had these in-depth conversations and questioning. Board President Camacho remarked that ultimately the Board wants to feel comfortable that the actions taken are consistent with what is being taught to students. He stated he believes Director Nolan and the naturalists to be experts in this program, but he also wants to focus on future opportunities for the Environmental Literacy, Sustainability, and Equity agendas. Board President Camacho summarized that the Board wants a fuller picture of what is going on. He apologized for the delay, but the will of the Board is to obtain additional information. Superintendent Magee noted that Ms. Del Monte and Mr. McComic were aware that the Board might not quite be ready to take action this evening, and the item could be extended to the October 7 meeting.

Board President Camacho expressed appreciation for Ms. Del Monte and Mr. McComic’s patience, reiterating the Board wants to be good stewards of SMCOE’s programs, students, and employees. He thanked them for their presentation and for hearing the questions and concerns of the Board, stating he looks forward to their attendance at the next meeting. Board President Camacho suggested they may want to send any relevant materials ahead of the meeting, allowing the Board time for preparation. Lastly, he thanked Director Nolan, expressed appreciation for his perspective on what is happening at the camp, and said everyone was happy to hear he and all employees are safe.

Mr. McComic requested that Director Nolan’s comments be forwarded the YMCA team. Superintendent Magee assured she would follow up.

D. Discuss/Act on Housing Recommendations from YMCA Housing Subcommittee

The Board took no action on this item.

E. Discuss/Act to Convene Ad Hoc Interdistrict Attendance Appeals Subcommittee to Discuss Possible Revisions to Board Regulation 5110 on Interdistrict Attendance Appeals

Superintendent Magee stated it came to her attention the Board is interested in revisiting the process and philosophy articulated in Board Regulation 5110 on Interdistrict Attendance Appeals (IAAs). She shared that the Board completed work on this topic, and the ad hoc subcommittee had been dissolved. Superintendent Magee suggested the Board may want to discuss what could be strengthened in the regulation and perhaps form a new ad hoc committee that could meet to discuss these issues and bring information back to the full Board.

Board President Camacho reported a few Board members have spoken with him about needing to look at the philosophy of Interdistrict Attendance appeals, and while they completed a good cleaning up of the procedures manual roughly two years ago, the philosophy statement still requires work. He stated he hoped to create time for interested Board members to dig deeper into the topics highlighted in recent IAAAs to see if any adjustments are necessary, particularly those aligned with the equity lens. Board President requested if it is the will of the Board, he could entertain action to create or reconvene the former ad hoc subcommittee, previously comprised of himself, Ms. Gerard, and Mr. Ross, with the new ad hoc subcommittee comprised of the same or new members.
Mr. Lempert spoke of the importance of ad hoc committees for researching and digging into issues. He shared his appreciation for the work of the YMCA Housing Committee and added that he was on a subcommittee with a district superintendent to get their thoughts on the IAA process. Mr. Lempert asked why this is being considered for a subcommittee? Board President Camacho agreed this was a valid question, and noted the Board could act as a whole. He said that subcommittees examine the fine details on an issue and tease out the main points to bring to the Board, but if it was to the liking of the Board, this process could be done as an agendized item.

Ms. Gerard asked if there needed to be a vote to create an ad hoc subcommittee and whether the ad hoc subcommittee would be comprised of the same members or if a new ad hoc subcommittee would be created. Board President Camacho replied it was up to the Board to decide and asked if the Board wanted to act on creating an Ad Hoc Interdistrict Attendance Appeals Subcommittee or agendize the issue as a topic for discussion with the full Board.

Ms. Alvaro stated she agreed with Mr. Lempert, and suggested the ad hoc subcommittee could do the preliminary work to discuss legal ramifications and lay the groundwork to be brought back to the full Board for its discussion and consideration. She stated she would be happy to have the same members on the subcommittee.

Mr. Lempert stated he too was fine with the same members being on the ad hoc subcommittee. He requested the ad hoc subcommittee focus less on recommendations and more on explaining the initial research done to structure a conversation to form recommendations as a whole.

Board President Camacho explained this is consistent with what is done for charter schools, as the preference is for the staff to put reports together and let the Board engage in deeper conversations about where they want to go. He summarized the Board prefers to move forward with the creation of an ad hoc subcommittee tasked with doing the legwork on research. Board President Camacho requested that if formed, the ad hoc subcommittee remain on a tight timeline to move forward and accomplish their goals by the end of the calendar year to be prepared to implement changes for the next cycle.

After a motion by Ms. Alvaro and a second by Ms. Gerard, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Hsiao, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved convening an Ad Hoc Interdistrict Attendance Appeals Subcommittee to discuss possible revisions to Board Regulation 5110 on Interdistrict Attendance Appeals.

Board President Camacho stated if it was to the liking of the Board, the same members would serve on the ad hoc subcommittee. Mr. Cannon asked who served on the previous committee. Board President Camacho said the subcommittee was comprised of himself, Ms. Gerard, and Mr. Ross, all of whom confirmed they were willing to continue. Board President Camacho informed they would try to set up an initial meeting soon with Chief Deputy County Counsel Cunningham and Superintendent Magee.
F. Board Member Comments

Mr. Cannon
Mr. Cannon expressed admiration for all the years Ms. Gerard has worked with CCBE and how the CCBE Conference must have been a satisfying experience for her, first that it was organized and implemented successfully, and second that it was of such high quality. He also expressed admiration for the excellent job Mr. Ross did in his interview with Mr. Yuan.

Ms. Gerard
Ms. Gerard thanked Mr. Cannon for his compliments and thanked everyone for all of the information shared throughout the evening, especially on the Outdoor Education item. She expressed appreciation for the work done by the YMCA Housing Subcommittee, acknowledging that it is a venture near and dear to the hearts of the three Board members on that subcommittee, and reiterated her request for additional information.

Ms. Gerard thanked everyone who attended the CCBE Conference, agreeing with Mr. Cannon that it was a totally new experience. She said it went well and received positive feedback. She spoke of thanking Mr. Ross for stepping up to the plate with such a wonderful speaker, Mr. Yuan, and shared that even more important than the information shared about Zoom was hearing Mr. Yuan’s philosophy for doing business and placing importance on people. Ms. Gerard suggested everyone needs to consider this. She thanked Mr. Ross again for all of his help and thanked everyone for being such great Board members with whom she enjoys collaborating.

Mr. Ross
Mr. Ross thanked Mr. Cannon and Ms. Gerard for their compliments and thanked Ms. Gerard for opening the door to allow him to help organize the CCBE Conference. He described Mr. Yuan as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a venture-backed company which started from nothing and turned it into what it is now. Mr. Yuan is such a decent person who truly conveyed his desire to invest in the happiness of his team and from there extend that happiness to his customers. Mr. Ross shared Mr. Yuan backs up his values by giving Zoom away for free to K-12 education and not raising prices for years on services. He described how Mr. Yuan goes against all the rules of what one would expect for a venture-backed CEO. Mr. Ross expressed appreciation for all the positive comments shared, for everyone who attended the CCBE Conference, and for the night’s meeting.

Mr. Hsiao
Mr. Hsiao echoed the words of his colleagues. He shared he attended three or four of the sessions over the weekend, all of which were top quality. He gave a shout-out to Ms. Gerard for all she did to organize the conference and to Mr. Ross for his graceful facilitation of Mr. Yuan. Mr. Ross added in that Mr. Hsiao was amazing as a panelist asking great questions and representing the Board. Mr. Hsiao said it was easy to ask questions, but it is difficult to generate the momentum and energy as Mr. Ross was able to do. He spoke of Mr. Yuan’s emphasis on the common refrain of gratitude, and another Trustee speaking of attitude and gratitude, both of which we all need to double down on at this time.
Mr. Hsiao expressed disappointment that the YMCA housing conversation did not advance as he expected, but he wants to ensure staff feel listened to, acknowledged, and respected. It is not often staff comes before the Board to advocate so vehemently on their concerns. Mr. Hsiao expressed appreciation for Ms. Alvaro’s suggestions on concrete steps to take to expedite and draw the process to a conclusion. Lastly, he thanked everyone for the difficult, but constructive discussion.

Ms. Alvaro
Ms. Alvaro shared she enjoyed the CCBE Conference, attended almost every session, enjoyed being able to attend from home, and although she missed the social component, she did not miss the ride back from Monterey on Sunday afternoon. She congratulated Mr. Ross for doing such a great job and emphasized that Mr. Yuan was wonderful, comparing him to listening to Socrates, discussing his focus on happiness and gratitude as the key motivators of a good life. Ms. Alvaro described him as a great guy, reiterated that Mr. Ross did a great job, and thanked Mr. Hsiao for chiming in on the panel.

Ms. Alvaro shared she was happy that Principal Van Zandt and his family, who had been evacuated from their home due to the fires, had recently been allowed to return home, their home is fine, and everyone is safe. Ms. Alvaro also shared that sadly one of our own special education teachers had lost their home in the fires, and she expressed sympathy to the family. Lastly, she also expressed condolences to Deputy Superintendent Littrell who has had a rough time this year, and said her heart goes out to her.

Mr. Lempert
Mr. Lempert echoed condolences to Deputy Superintendent Littrell. He shared he and Superintendent Magee had spoken at the League of Women Voters’ panel regarding Proposition 15 with County Manager Mike Callagy, and he felt Superintendent Magee did a great job. Mr. Lempert discussed working with San Mateo County on mental health and early childhood issues, and how pleased he was with Mr. Callagy, who said all the right things about the county investing in early childhood and had a lot of praise for Superintendent Magee, SMCOE, and the Big Lift. He expressed how thrilled he was with Mr. Callagy’s comments, and he hopes additional progress can be made to ensure county services are provided as much as possible where students are located and to continue to support SMCOE and early childhood.

Board President Camacho
Board President Camacho also extended condolences to Deputy Superintendent Littrell and her family, who have experienced a tough several months. He stated he was thinking along the same lines as Mr. Lempert during the elected officials and city managers meeting earlier that day, reflecting on how the pandemic has led to increased communication that didn’t exist pre-COVID.

Board President Camacho spoke about the County Manager being on a call with elected city and school leaders, and asking Superintendent Magee to address a question, with everyone hearing about what is going on in schools. He described a better sense that cities and schools are in this together, whether there is a pandemic or not. Board President Camacho thanked Superintendent Magee for being at those meetings and keeping the county in the loop about what is going on in schools. He expressed appreciation for this dynamic and hopes that momentum will continue. Board President Camacho emphasized he and Superintendent Magee’s desire and goal is for San Mateo County to be a
child-centered county. Board President Camacho thanked Mr. Lempert for his work with Children Now, as that is the mission of the organization.

Board President Camacho thanked his fellow Board members for the evening’s robust conversations on difficult topics, but ultimately, they are stewards of SMCOE programs, student experiences, and employees, and he appreciates the respect and comradery which exists on the Board, as well as their ability to engage in conversations, disagree, and agree. He emphasized it is always an honor to serve alongside his fellow Board members, and he expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be on the Board with them.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. Board President Camacho announced there would be a special Board meeting on Thursday, October 1, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. to hear two Interdistrict Attendance Appeals and the next regular meeting would take place on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

Nancy Magee, Secretary
jlp