1. OPENING ITEMS

A. Call to Order

Board President Hector Camacho, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:01 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 provided 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

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Jr., Jim Cannon, Beverly Gerard, Ted Lempert, Joe Ross), by roll call vote, approved the May 5, 2021, agenda as presented.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speakers provided live public comment:

- Janice Pellizzari, SMCOE teacher and San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) President, thanked Denise Porterfield, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division
PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

for the presentation earlier in the day on the new playground, and shared that Susan Carroll, Speech-Language Pathologist, would be leaving SMCOE and will be greatly missed.

Board President Camachio offered his heartfelt thanks to Ms. Carroll.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. April 21, 2021, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Cannon, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Minutes of the April 21, 2021, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

4. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Receive Update on Early Learning Support Services Data: Innovations and Impact

Alyson Suzuki, Executive Director, Early Learning Support Services, introduced Diana Harlick, Coordinator, Early Learning Quality Improvement Initiatives, who presented an update on Early Learning Support Services Data: Innovations and Impact. She addressed the following topics in detail:

- Defining Features of Data Strategy
- An Ecosystems Approach to Data
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- Mounting Financial Hardships for K-2 Families Over the 2020-2021 School Year
- Links to Family Trauma and Stress
- Kindergarten Readiness Rates for Big Lift Students at Sites Utilizing Targeted Language and Literacy Approaches
- Foundational Quality and Intentional, Sequenced Math and Literacy Skill Development in Pre-K Leading to Improved Kindergarten Readiness and Second Grade Reading Proficiency
- Future Opportunities

Ms. Alvaro shared that Coordinator Harlick and Executive Director Suzuki are well respected across the county. Ms. Alvaro referred to chronic absenteeism in preschool and asked how to make the case that attendance matters in preschool. Coordinator Harlick replied the team has partnered with EveryDay Labs on an attendance strategy implemented for the Big Lift. That effort pushes out positive messaging to preschool families around attendance and helps families realize how much schooling their children have missed. Coordinator Harlick said research shows this issue carries into elementary school, so the team works to help families understand the cumulative effects of missing school days.
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION (continued)

Ms. Alvaro shared she will attend the Big Lift Collaborative on May 19, and looks forward to learning more about the reading program for preschool. She asked if the team was already working on this pilot. Coordinator Harlick responded that yes, the pilot is just kicking off.

Ms. Bonini asked for how many years the vertical data has been tracked. Coordinator Harlick responded the data has been tracked for about ten years and has become more sophisticated over time. In the days of Preschool For All (PFA), they entered attendance data at the office, but the approach has evolved with technology solutions.

Ms. Bonini referred to the nine districts doing tracking, seven of which are Big Lift districts. She asked how the other two districts are involved and about efforts to get more districts involved. Coordinator Harlick responded that the two other non-Big Lift districts are Brisbane School District and Bayshore School District, who both opted to adopt the kindergarten readiness assessment voluntarily. In the early stages of the Big Lift, the team did outreach and these districts took advantage of the opportunity.

Ms. Bonini asked for additional information on the need to add family support capacities in the coming year. Coordinator Harlick stated this will be a partnership between the Big Lift and State Preschool under the leadership of Sheryl Chan, Manager, State Preschool Program. The goal is to align around research and explore data opportunities to track the services being received by families and assess what difference these services are making.

Ms. Bonini referred to Reading Corps and asked if it involves local recruitment. Coordinator Harlick responded the goals are to recruit locally and align recruitment with local early learning workforce pipeline efforts. The team is working with the community colleges and thinks the timing is good for individuals seeking a career start or change.

Mr. Lempert thanked Coordinator Harlick for her leadership, along with Executive Director Suzuki and their team, and shared his excitement for all the work they are doing. He discussed playing an active role behind the scenes with Cradle to Career data efforts. He noted that the next step is to support a robust data system for early learning. He would love to connect his colleagues with Coordinator Harlick’s team, because they are leading this effort across the state, and the Governor is committed.

Mr. Lempert shared that data can impact programs, policies, and interventions. Additionally, it would be great if individual teachers can use data, and if the data is more connected, how it can be useful to parents, as well. He asked for additional clarification on whether the data can be used as a tool to provide more information for individual students. Coordinator Harlick replied that the team has been supporting the meaningful use of the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), the major preschool assessment tool. She said a lot of programs are also using Learning Genie, which enables parents to access DRDP information on their phones and serves as a family engagement strategy. Directors and site supervisors are focused on adding other data to the lens, such as kindergarten readiness and absences. Executive Director Suzuki noted it was interesting during distance learning when parents were using the DRDP tool to help track progress and developmental goals.
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EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION  (continued)

Board President Camacho shared appreciation for conversations focused on play-based learning and pre-literacy and pre-math base skills. He asked about initial data collection on student experiences before they enter school systems and whether enrollment forms include questions about preschool attendance or previous childcare arrangements. Coordinator Harlick said for Big Lift districts there is a universal parent form with a series of questions about preschool. She went on to confirm that most districts do not have information on student preschool experiences.

Board President Camacho indicated he would love the community to hear more about the benefits of high-quality early learning experiences and how this contributes to kindergarten readiness and literacy.

Mr. Cannon said to ensure he has good understanding of a program he likes to have concrete examples. He expressed his appreciation for the data collection and the attendance example. He asked if schools have plans in place to improve attendance or if teachers have scripts for working with parents. Coordinator Harlick responded that solutions look different across programs. She explained it is a challenge for directors to address underlying family issues that may be at the root of attendance challenges, so it’s important for solutions to include individual options.

5. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. Discuss/Act on the Assembly Bill (AB) 86 Plan for SMCOE Expanded Learning Opportunities

Superintendent Magee presented information on the Assembly Bill (AB) 86 Plan for SMCOE Expanded Learning Opportunities. She addressed the following topics in detail:

- SMCOE Strategic Plan 2022-2027 Impact for Equity
- AB 86: COVID-19 Relief and School Reopening
  - Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant
  - In-Person Learning Grant
- Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant
- AB 86: Key Strategies
  - Provide robust SMCOE support to special education programs countywide
  - Provide SMCOE student programs with additional supports for credit recovery and academic acceleration
  - Provide countywide support and training for additional academic services
  - Provide extended learning to address missed opportunities
- AB 86: In-Person Learning Funds
  - Create a restorative and trauma-informed model for alternative education at the Gateway campus that provides all county districts with affordable and quality programming for students who are not thriving in the comprehensive environment

Mr. Ross referred to the extended learning time portion of the funding and asked about the number of students and hours that results in, specifically for SMCOE. Superintendent Magee said she could not
give a specific number, but explained there are two ways in which these supports are being addressed. First, the team is providing additional resources to SMCOE programs so they can be more effective for SMCOE students. Second, the work with the special education model, DataZone, and Outdoor Education is outward-facing to districts and addresses needs countywide.

Executive Director Notch shared the team is committed to making sure they are unified in their approach to learning acceleration, COVID-19 response, and general quality improvement in all programs. They have been working hard to create a school model that applies equitable resources and opportunities for students and staff. She described how this funding furthers that vision. The team has evolved SMCOE’s special education programs into the E-22 model, with a focus on the continuum of services for students birth to age 22, which is one example of how the team is working to align the programs.

Executive Director Gnusti discussed that with the reconfiguration of Gateway and the opportunity to work with partnering school districts, the team will be able to shift the model with greater focus on student mental health needs with the goal to build emotional resilience for students returning into school populations, especially post COVID-19. Deploying a current principal to support the new vision and ensure cohesiveness and driven by student outcomes will help build a sustainable program.

Ms. Bonini shared her excitement to see this new focus on helping districts with their needs around special education. This is a passion of hers because there are serious gaps and so much work to be done. Using these specific funds to launch this work is exciting. She believes there were already significant gaps among the student populations having the lowest performance on measurements. Gaps are even bigger now, and districts really need this support. Ms. Bonini made a motion to approve.

Superintendent Magee noted reasons SMCOE is able to launch this work now is one because of the funding, but also because of the leadership and skills of Executive Director Notch and Executive Director Gnusti. They are both exemplary leaders with the ability to stay focused on a vision and implement it. Superintendent Magee emphasized these are the leaders to carry this work forward.

Mr. Lempert seconded Ms. Bonini’s motion.

Board President Camacho requested clarity on the $1.7 million, asking if most would go towards staffing. Superintendent Magee confirmed that was correct. He asked if the traditional 75-80% or the entire 100% would go towards staffing. Superintendent Magee estimated that between support for the DataZone and Outdoor Education, $600,000 of the roughly $1.7 million is being applied directly to program. She added that another, $200,000 is applied to paraeducator staffing which is required in the legislation. She acknowledged that another small portion of funding is allocated for students experiencing homelessness. The rest is applied to innovative staffing.

With the motion by Ms. Bonini and a second by Mr. Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Assembly Bill (AB) 86 Plan for SMCOE Expanded Learning Opportunities.
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

B. Receive Initial Proposal from the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 to the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools for 2021-2022

The Board received the Initial Proposal from the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 to the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools for 2021-2022.

C. Receive Initial Proposal from the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools to the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 for the 2021-2022 Reopener Bargaining Agreement

The Board received the Initial Proposal from the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools to the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 158 for the 2021-2022 Reopener Bargaining Agreement.

D. Superintendent’s Comments

Superintendent Magee expressed great appreciation and respect to every single teacher in SMCOE programs and acknowledged those also attending tonight’s meeting for their great work with students every single day. Saying thank you is a small gesture, but she assured all that the sentiment is heartfelt. If there has ever been a time when the country has seen the impact of teachers, it has been over the past two years.

Superintendent Magee shared it is a difficult and bittersweet moment to send off two of SMCOE’s highly respected leaders. She shared that Lori Musso, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources/Teacher and Administrator Development, will retire at the end of July and Denise Porterfield, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, will be moving over to the Contra Costa County Office of Education. While these are huge losses to SMCOE, it’s also an amazing time to acknowledge the pride Superintendent Magee feels for the San Mateo County Office of Education. She said the organization’s impact these past few years during emergency times is directly related to the talent and expertise of leaders like Associate Superintendent Musso and Deputy Superintendent Porterfield.

Superintendent Magee discussed being called into a number of legislative meetings over the past two weeks as the legislature is barreling down on what learning will look like for students in California in the coming year. She has been vocal in every meeting about the importance of taking the spirit of innovation forward as we move ahead. She explained that some legislators are set on returning to all pre-COVID-19 requirements and structures, but she believes we can do that and be innovative applying skills mastered during the pandemic.

Superintendent Magee shared she attended a meeting with four County Superintendents, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) leadership, and the lead staff of the Assembly’s Education Committee and Budget Appropriations Committee. She also attended a meeting convened by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, with special guest Assemblymember Phil Ting, the lead of the Budget Committee. This meeting was also attended by a number of other legislators including Assemblymember Robert Rivas,
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

Assemblymember Mark Levine, Senator Josh Becker, Senator Steve Glazer, and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks. Superintendent Magee indicated she did get a moment to express her vision of how we might be innovative in setting future structures for schools.

Superintendent Magee shared that work is ongoing around vaccinations especially as the team prepares to help organize vaccinations for the 12-15 year-old population.

Superintendent Magee wished a happy birthday to Jeneé Littrell, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services Division, who is celebrating her birthday today.

Superintendent Magee is looking forward to the Kent Awards on Friday night. She also reminded the Board about Floyd Gonella’s memorial service to be held at SMCOE in late July. She will send out a save-the-date notice.

7. BOARD MEMBERS

A. Discuss/Act on 2021-2022 Board Meeting Calendar

Superintendent Magee discussed the Board meeting calendar’s typical schedule and emphasized the attention on religious and cultural holidays to ensure dates do not inappropriately conflict. She pointed out a date change for September 2021, with Board meetings scheduled for the first and fourth Wednesdays, instead of the first and third Wednesdays, to avoid a conflict with the observance of Yom Kippur.

Ms. Bonini asked about the potential for a retreat and if this would appear on the calendar. Superintendent Magee replied that typically, a Board meeting date is used for a retreat, although an additional date could be added. Determining if the July 21 Board meeting will be a retreat could be discussed at a later date, because the Board would want to identify expected outcomes for a retreat.

Mr. Lempert indicated that if and when the Board returns to in-person meetings, the 6 p.m. time does not work for him starting in September, unless he is allowed to do the meeting by phone. He pointed out that the calendar states when Board meetings return to in-person meetings, the start time will be 7 p.m., and shared he wasn’t sure if Board members would be allowed to attend over Zoom. Superintendent Magee said there is legislation about the potential extension of the Brown Act and asked Chief Deputy County Counsel Cunningham when current Brown Act extensions expire. Chief Deputy County Counsel Cunningham confirmed they are set to expire when physical distancing requirements are no longer in place.

Board President Camacho thanked Mr. Lempert for bringing up this issue and confirmed no action was required at this time. He indicated these issues would be kept in mind for future planning. Board President Camacho stated when the Board begins meeting in person, perhaps not everyone would meet in person, and the Board may lean towards either 6 p.m. or 7 p.m. He hopes to agendize a discussion about these decisions at a June meeting.
BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

After a motion by Ms. Gerard and a second by Mr. Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the 2021-2022 Board Meeting Calendar.

B. Conduct First of Two Public Hearings on the Proposed Trustee Voting Area Plans

Board President Camacho opened the first of two Public Hearings to receive public testimony concerning the proposed trustee voting area plans.

- Tricia Barr discussed potential conflicts when the Board hears interdistrict attendance appeals and suggested that crossing district boundaries would be best.

- Colleen You asked about the rationale for the area including the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District extending over to the La-Honda Pescadero Unified School District and Cabrillo Unified School District.

Superintendent Magee referred to the work of the County Committee on School District Organization (CCSDO) and how every 10 years, the committee is required to realign trustee areas in as equal population numbers as possible following the release of the decennial census. When the CCSDO set those boundaries, the coastside trustee area had the largest land mass but the smallest number of people. In order to make the trustee areas more equal in population, as required by law, credence was given to the continuity of transportation. Including Belmont kept the area contiguous with transit routes.

Receiving no further public comment, Board President Camacho declared the Public Hearing closed and indicated there would be a second public hearing at the next Board meeting.

C. Discuss/Act on Board Support of Pending Legislation

Mr. Ross shared the following people attended the Legislative Subcommittee: Mr. Ross, Ms. Bonini, Mr. Camacho, Youth Commissioner Liaison Chan, Superintendent Magee, and Executive Director Love. Mr. Ross reported the subcommittee came to consensus on Senate Bill (SB) 692, with a recommendation that the Board sign onto a letter of support.

Mr. Ross informed there are no recommendations for the other legislation outlined in the memo – SB 692, Assembly Bill (AB) 339, and AB 988, and invited the Board to discuss further. The purpose of the bills being included on the agenda was to have discussion and solicit Board feedback.

Board President Camacho added the Legislative Subcommittee ran out of time at their meeting and was unable to discuss the other bills. They did review the bill summaries but spent most of their time editing the resolution featured in item 6.D. and discussing SB 692.

Ms. Alvaro thanked Mr. Ross for the presentation and the Legislative Subcommittee for their work. She expressed a strong opinion on SB 739, stating for as long as she has been on the Board there
have been few, if any, safety nets for foster youth who age out of the programs. Ms. Alvaro shared she supports the idea of offering universal, basic income for transitional age foster youth, of which there are only 2,500 in the entire state at any given time. This funding could provide assistance for several years, is not a huge burden on the budget, and is the right thing to do. She suggested the Legislative Subcommittee look at this bill in greater depth to see if this is something the Board could support.

Ms. Gerard indicated she also has strong feelings about SB 739 and definitely supports the bill, for the same reasons as Ms. Alvaro. This issue has concerned her for several years. There are many stories of foster youth turning 18 and immediately finding themselves without resources. The foster youth need assistance, and she supports this bill 100%. Ms. Gerard shared she is thrilled the Legislative Subcommittee is bringing these bills forward for the Board to discuss, and she appreciates their efforts.

Board President Camacho referred to AB 339 and noted that the bill does not apply to school boards. Ms. Alvaro confirmed that was correct, and added it applies to city councils and boards of supervisors. Board President Camacho asked if the Board should take action on something that doesn’t impact them but impacts other colleagues and puts strain on their resources. He said he is a fan of open meetings, but these factors should be taken into account.

Ms. Bonini agreed in its current form, the bill doesn’t necessarily apply to school boards, but added she believes the bill may change form as it goes through the process. Ms. Bonini described how the pandemic via online meetings, has created more accessibility for the public to attend. She described how the Commission on Disabilities has started an ad-hoc committee to address accessibility in various forms. Ms. Bonini emphasized that showing support for the concept of having an extension is important even if it doesn’t currently cover the school boards. Ms. Bonini also thanked Executive Director Notch for her attendance at the Commission on Disabilities meetings.

Ms. Alvaro cautioned that whether or not she thinks the bill is a good idea in general, when a bill does not apply to school boards, it is not the time for the Board to take a stand. She stated that when a bill applies to city councils and boards of supervisors and not school boards, the Board should not be publicly endorsing or vetoing the bill. If it comes up later that they are discussing school boards and boards of education, they can decide at that time whether to support the bill. Ms. Alvaro urged caution that the Board not take a position that communicates they have powers and jurisdictions they do not have.

Board President Camacho discussed how this input is helpful so when AB 339 comes up they have the Board’s pulse before bringing a letter of support before the Board. Mr. Ross noted there is also a letter of support before the Board for SB 692, and he thanked Ms. Bonini for surfacing that bill and for kicking off this work. He indicated that the California County Board of Education (CCBE) has a few individuals on the Executive Committee with access to additional summaries of legislation, so the Board can be robust with their process moving forward, if that is the preference of the Board.
Mr. Ross continued there are other pieces of legislation receiving attention in other counties, including one involving student representatives on school boards, and noted there will be more information to come. Mr. Ross thanked everyone for their feedback and requested the Board approve the letter of support and asked Superintendent Magee to submit the letter at the most strategic time based on conversations with the Santa Clara County Office of Education.

Ms. Alvaro asked if the agenda language allowed the Board to approve letters of support, and if so, she hoped the Board could also take action on SB 739. Chief Deputy County Counsel Cunningham confirmed the item was properly agendized.

Mr. Ross expressed his strong support of addressing youth coming out of the foster system.

After a motion by Ms. Alvaro and a second by Ms. Gerard, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved issuing letters of support for SB 692 and SB 739.

Board President Camacho stated Mr. Ross has input on the additional two pieces of legislation and encouraged his colleagues to bring to the Board any legislation they would like the Board to consider. He added since he is on the Legislative Subcommittee for the San Mateo County School Boards Association (SMCSBA), he would also inform SMCSBA that the Board has taken action to support SB 692 and SB 739. He thanked Mr. Ross and Ms. Bonini for their leadership and participation in this process, Youth Commissioner Liaison Chan for being a phenomenal addition to the Legislative Subcommittee meeting, and Superintendent Magee and staff for their staff support.

D. Discuss/Act on Second Reading of Board Resolution No. 21-27 Urging California to Set the Expectation of Fully Reopened Schools in Fall 2021

Mr. Ross shared that the Legislative Subcommittee had a good discussion on this resolution and the edits reflect the consensus at the time about ways to bring in the full range of points of view. Specifically, many of the comments made at the last Board meeting by Board President Camacho and Ms. Bonini were considered, as well as Mr. Lempert’s suggestion to add a phrase to make clear that the back-to-school expectation is intended so any family or student who wants to go back to school is allowed to do so. The additional resolution paragraph speaking to funding also addresses comments at the last Board meeting about the urgency around funding mental health and learning recovery as students and families manage the reality of going back to school after an unusual and uneven year. Mr. Ross indicated after reflection and discussion with individuals in his community, additional suggestions have arisen to consider.

The first suggestion is in the second to last Whereas clause, which speaks to educators working hard to apply their knowledge, but then goes on to state that distance learning should be considered an essential tool to include, he agrees but also thinks distance learning is a fairly complicated topic, and he doesn’t want to cause confusion. One option to consider is removing the distance learning reference and addressing that issue separately.
Mr. Ross addressed the second suggested edit, asking that that in the “Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved” clause, the phrase “by the beginning” be added, indicating the intention is that, subject to health conditions, students would be back to school by the beginning of the Fall 2021 enrollment term for all families who would like this option.

Mr. Ross discussed that some constituents read the second resolution as inviting ideas the Board would not intend around what is good for children related to the enabling of flexibility, which can be good and important, but can also not be good. Mr. Ross emphasized it is a good resolution as it stands but could be made more focused by removing the Whereas clause about distance learning. He expressed appreciation for the work of his colleagues and welcomed comments.

Board President Camacho summarized that Mr. Ross is suggesting striking the second to last Whereas clause and editing the first resolution to note “by the beginning” of Fall 2021. Mr. Ross confirmed those edits were correct. Board President Camacho reminded the Board could go to a third reading if necessary.

Ms. Alvaro stated she liked the way the resolution is written, and she understands this is just the Board’s resolution, not a law. She expressed concern about potentially striking the Whereas clause being discussed, because she has been in the middle of situations in her represented districts where there was no way to have school a number of times due to severe flooding and smoke. Ms. Alvaro emphasized distance learning provides an option when students are unable to go to school. She explained the Board is not advocating distance learning instead of going to class, but that the option should be kept open in case of catastrophe.

Ms. Bonini said it is important to leave in the Whereas clause because it references teachers and applies to catastrophes. She stated there is new Education Code that applies specifically to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and is an emergency provision, so this type of concept is forward-thinking for those types of emergencies. Under the new Education Code provision, those emergency plans and IEPs have to be in place by this June. She suggested this language is in line with the concept of planning for the future and there is no doubt there will be fires and other future catastrophes where this could be helpful. Ms. Bonini shared there are many skills which have been gained and while distance learning might not be preferred by most, there are good things which have come out of it.

Ms. Bonini reported that she is appreciative of the flexibility, especially from Mr. Ross, around being willing to consider removing the reference to the Education Code and long-standing policies that have not served all students well. She had pointed out in the subcommittee meeting that the very students who have not been served well by those policies are historically the same students most impacted by the pandemic, trauma, loss of family members, and fear of getting the vaccine.

Many have thrived for many reasons, one reason being their amazing teachers. Ms. Bonini shared that one of her friends is a teacher in the Ravenswood City School District who has done an amazing job with distance learning. She recognized not all teachers are comfortable with this instruction and not all students are amenable to it, but she knows distance learning is working for some. Her goal on this is aligned with Superintendent Magee’s advocacy, and she feels if the Board
doesn’t take this opportunity to embrace some of the learning from our experiences it’s a lost opportunity. Ms. Bonini summarized she is not opposed to adding language noting the beginning of the school year in the first resolution clause, but she would prefer to keep the Whereas clause.

Ms. Gerard shared she would also prefer to keep the Whereas clause for the reasons already discussed. She has felt strongly throughout the pandemic that there are options for students who weren’t otherwise successful and are successful now. This was something that we didn’t know how to do before, so it wasn’t done, but now we do know how to do it and it’s important that if the occasion comes up for any reason, there is the freedom to implement this method. She reiterated she is in favor of keeping this clause.

Mr. Ross stated it is great to hear the feedback around the power of technology and distance learning to improve outcomes for individual students. He agreed this is something people didn’t know how to do a year ago but now everyone realizes they can do more than they thought they could. Mr. Ross indicated he did not disagree with any of the discussion and the sentiment he surfaced arose from the possibility that people might misread the intent of that paragraph. He also assured that there will be minutes on record from this meeting that can help clarify the intent if there are concerns.

Mr. Ross continued he is not opposed to distance learning and he supports it, but there are different kinds of distance learning and its best use is to ensure that students have what they each need. Furthermore, Mr. Ross shared it strengthens the resolution to add the language about “the beginning of Fall 2021 enrollment term” in the first resolution paragraph, because it sets a marker, and moved to pass the resolution with that addition.

Board President Camacho declared that there is a motion to adopt the resolution with the edits regarding the beginning of Fall 2021, and asked if there was a second to the motion. Ms. Alvaro seconded the motion. Board President opened the topic back up for discussion.

- Tricia Barr, parent of three school-aged children, thanked and expressed appreciation to the Board for bringing the resolution forward and stating a position on the expectation for full fall in-person learning. She indicated that since the resolution is related to COVID-19 and health, including any reference to distance learning detracts from the focus being on in-person learning, the original intent of the resolution.

Mr. Lempert indicated he would vote for approval of the resolution, and he is fine with the edits, but he wanted to add to the conversation. He shared that the United States ranks in the 30th percentile in term of educational attainment and California ranks in the bottom five states and near the bottom of in-person opening. This is alarming to him and should be to everyone in the country. In other countries, schools were the last to close and first to open, but in the United States the focus was on bars, tourism, and restaurants. Mr. Lempert stated that the education system should focus on each student, and distance learning should be a huge part of that, as shared by his colleagues, but he doesn’t like connecting them. He reiterated he would vote to approve the resolution because there should be a more individualized education system and distance learning is critical in achieving that, but California is at the bottom of the country on educational attainment. Mr. Lempert
emphasized that he is voting for this resolution because he agrees with the importance of distance learning and hopes he is wrong that the equity gaps will only further widen. He is voting to approve the resolution with it on the record that it is stunning to him how far California is behind the rest of the country and how far behind the United States is from the rest of the world.

Board President Camacho reminded the Board there is a motion on the table and stated he wanted to propose another amendment, indicating they would have to vote on the amendment and the resolution. He shared it was brought to his attention that instead of using the term “distance learning,” they could use the term “virtual options” since there are many feelings around the term distance learning. He also asked the language limiting the class need to quarantine due to severe smoke by removing the language about smoke and quarantine and stating “in providing cohesive instruction when a class may experience a temporary restriction of in-person instruction.” Board President Camacho referred to Ms. Alvaro’s comments about flooding and other disasters and the consideration to be less specific.

Ms. Alvaro stated she was okay with removing the language related to a smoke event or quarantine because she has experienced schools shutting down for flooding, fire evacuations, and fear of landslides when rains came after fires, and suggested language to include all forms of natural disasters works. She also noted the language indicates when “the county” experiences a severe event, but sometimes the entire county doesn’t experience it, but a district or city may. She suggested removing the specifics around smoke or quarantine to indicate whenever anything “bad” happens, there is still a way to instruct students.

Mr. Ross suggested in light of public comment and Mr. Lempert’s comments, the Board should consider having a resolution on distance learning separate from this resolution on return to school. He discussed how the COVID-19 crisis has provided essential lessons in distance learning, virtual learning, and technology in education, and trying to put it all into the Whereas clause is challenging. Mr. Ross also agreed with Ms. Bonini that we should recognize educators who have done an amazing job working hard to improve their instructional knowledge and skills around technology-enabled instruction and other tools addressing the learning needs of every student. He remarked that a resolution on distance learning could be its own thing. Mr. Ross described how he would go beyond virtual learning to discuss skills around virtual options and technology-enabled instruction, to broaden all that has been learned. He suggested that either option looks good, and added it may be worth considering a different resolution on what technology and distance education could look like for each student, based on what has been learned during the pandemic.

Ms. Bonini referred to the first resolution statement’s language about flexible, child-centered learning options, which is much more broad than virtual learning or distance learning, and would encompass that idea if that is the intent. She proposed that using that language might solve the issue in the Whereas clause. Ms. Bonini also described how the resolution focuses on funding and expressed mixed feelings about the legislature telling districts what to do with local control. Her second request was that if the clause is kept as-is with an appeal to the legislature for funding, that the Board also consider adding the words “and flexibility” after funding and removing the other reference to “flexible,” leaving the language “to provide adequate funding and flexibility to enable schools to provide child-centered learning options.”
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BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Board President Camacho acknowledged the Board was heading for a third reading on the resolution because there are several issues to sort out.

Ms. Gerard expressed confusion about what was being added and deleted and stated she was not comfortable voting on the resolution until she could see the concise edits in writing. She added she does not have a problem with changing "distance learning" to "virtual" and she would like to see the specifics removed, with added wording related to "disasters" preventing in-class instruction. Ms. Gerard emphasized this is still important, and although this is not what the Board is advocating for, the teachers worked hard to learn how to do pivot which was difficult. She would like to see that recognized in this resolution. If the Board wants another resolution on distance learning, that is great, but she thinks the language related to virtual should be kept. Ms. Gerard agreed a third reading would be appreciated.

Board President Camacho advised the Board could take a vote or Mr. Ross could withdraw his motion. In response, Mr. Ross withdrew his motion. Board President Camacho confirmed the Board would go to a third reading and offered to help Mr. Ross draft a distance learning resolution. He thanked the Board for their input, conversation, and patience, as well as Superintendent Magee and Executive Director Love for taking notes on the edits, and expressed appreciation for the issues raised.

E. Board Member Comments

Ms. Bonini
Ms. Bonini discussed how her breath was taken away hearing of the staff and leaders taking different paths. She spoke of being new to the Board, but being around for a while in other districts and on the Personnel Commission, and having the great honor to work a little bit with Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and even more so with Associate Superintendent Musso, who served as the Interim Director of the Personnel Commission. Ms. Bonini expressed excitement for their new paths and transitions, but she feels sad and will miss them. She thanked them for their amazing service to the office.

Ms. Bonini thanked everyone for the conversations around the resolution and discussed the importance of taking the opportunity to think about the issue and make a statement reflecting the needs of each individual student. She thanked Superintendent Magee for her advocacy because it is an important part of their role and authority in different realms to advocate to legislators. She noted she is doing that, despite differences of opinion. Ms. Bonini described having difficult conversations with legislators, but she will continue to advocate for all students.

Mr. Ross
Mr. Ross shared that Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and Associate Superintendent Musso are among the most professional public servants he has ever encountered across multiple sectors including national security and education. SMCOE has been so honored by their presence over the last several years. He expressed that they will be greatly missed, and he is deeply grateful.
Mr. Lempert thanked Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and Associate Superintendent Musso for their extraordinary leadership. He spoke of Associate Superintendent Musso's engaging presentations, discussed what a difference she has made for students around the county, thanked her for her work, and expressed that she would be sorely missed. He described how school finance is so complicated, and even most School Board members don't understand it, but Deputy Superintendent Porterfield was magically able to make sure the Board understood the work and provide explanations in a straightforward way when there were questions, which is a truly amazing skill. He said that the Contra Costa County Office of Education is fortunate because Deputy Superintendent Porterfield makes school finance something public officials and the public can better understand, and he wishes there were many more of her. Mr. Lempert thanked her for her remarkable skill and leadership.

Mr. Cannon said it is difficult to improve upon the comments of his colleagues regarding Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and Associate Superintendent Musso. He agreed with all earlier comments shared. Mr. Cannon added that Associate Superintendent Musso has taken on many new roles that were each so different from previous roles, but she mastered the roles professionally and with extraordinary grace. He described seeing business managers, businesspeople, Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, and Assistant Superintendents in the business office over the past 50 years, and admired Deputy Superintendent Porterfield’s role as a partner with the Board working for the education of children as one of the best examples he has ever seen. Superintendent Porterfield was a full partner in handling the money, but also in integrating the concerns of education with the business office. Mr. Cannon thanked Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and her staff for their leadership and for being partners with the Board.

Mr. Cannon expressed his gratitude for Superintendent Magee’s references to Executive Director Notch and Executive Director Gnusti, because as top staff members leave, there is confidence in those coming up. He emphasized that the organization needs outstanding replacements for the staff members leaving, and knowing there is staff like Executive Director Notch and Executive Director Gnusti is encouraging.

Mr. Cannon shared he is glad to have Ms. Pellizzari attend the meeting as a regular presence, and he appreciates hearing the teachers’ voices from the leadership of the teachers’ organization.

Mr. Cannon discussed attending a productive conference session on budgeting with Cabinet earlier in the day and described how he always tries to focus on a few good take-aways from each meeting he attends. From today's meeting, he focused on Deputy Superintendent Porterfield's emphasis on how the budget used to be set by the time it was adopted, and then there was a year to implement it as approved. In today’s climate, there are so many changes that come up during the year, especially with COVID-19 relief and federal and state government funds/grants coming in, that the budget is a work in progress. It is a constant fight to understand what is going on, to implement the money, and to use it wisely.
Ms. Alvaro
Ms. Alvaro remarked it is difficult to follow any of the Board members. She referred to Teacher Appreciation Week, thanked the teachers, and acknowledged how much the Board appreciates every single teacher every single day for being amazing, regardless of how and where they are delivering instruction.

Ms. Alvaro shared she looks forward to attending the Big Lift Collaborative Meeting on May 19, representing the Board as part of her subcommittee assignment. She expressed excitement to learn more about the reading core literacy program for preschools as discussed earlier with Coordinator Harlick.

Ms. Alvaro shared that Elisa Magidoff, Executive Director, Coastside Children’s Programs, just resigned after four incredible years. Ms. Magidoff did a great job, and Ms. Alvaro is sorry to see her go. The Interim Executive Director is Mei Clark, who grew up on the coast and is a graduate of Half Moon Bay High School. Ms. Alvaro has known her since Ms. Clark was a freshman in high school. Ms. Alvaro shared her excitement to see the next generation stepping into leadership roles. She knows Ms. Clark will do a wonderful job, and she looks forward to their work together.

Ms. Alvaro discussed it has been great working with Deputy Superintendent Porterfield, and she appreciates all she has done for SMCOE. When Ms. Alvaro first came on the Board, Jim Hooley was the Chief Business Officer (CBO). He was wonderful, and you could take everything he said to the bank, if you could understand him. He presented to the Board with long explanations and lots of detail and the Board would have to ask Margie Gustafson, Executive Director, Internal Business Services, for a translation of what Mr. Hooley said. The Board never had to do this with Deputy Superintendent Porterfield, and Ms. Alvaro appreciated being able to understand the complicated ideas being conveyed. She spoke of how local Boards felt that even when Deputy Superintendent Porterfield was yelling at them, they knew why and understood the solutions. Ms. Alvaro thanked Deputy Superintendent Porterfield for everything.

Ms. Alvaro shared her excitement that Associate Superintendent Musso’s daughters are getting married and staying local. She is also excited about Associate Superintendent Musso’s retirement. They have worked on so many projects that Ms. Alvaro has lost count. Associate Superintendent Musso keeps taking on new endeavors and coming up with new ideas such as the teacher training and the administrator credentialing. The Board always encourages her projects because they know she will do a great job. Ms. Alvaro stated she is happy that Associate Superintendent Musso is stepping back and taking time for herself and her family, but this is a huge loss to the organization and she will miss working together.

Ms. Gerard
Ms. Gerard recognized the phenomenal teachers and shared she has seen a lot of social media throughout the week related to teacher appreciation, which made her think of all the special teachers at SMCOE. She and her Board colleagues have all bragged over the years about the programs and the people teaching our students. Ms. Gerard recognized all teachers, but especially the SMCOE teachers. Ms. Gerard emphasized she is a firm believer in advocacy and noted it is being taught in the boardmanship courses and training of new Board members. There is a lot out there for Board member to advocate for, and if the Board doesn’t do it, she is not sure who will.
Ms. Gerard expressed her deep respect for Deputy Superintendent Porterfield. She explained that understanding budgets is the hardest part of being a Board member for her, but Deputy Superintendent Porterfield makes concepts clear. Ms. Gerard described how a lot of people have tried to explain budgets to her, and sometimes it felt as if they were speaking a foreign language. She complimented Deputy Superintendent Porterfield for wearing many different hats, and handling not only the budget, but property issues and helping districts with budgets. Ms. Gerard described Deputy Superintendent Porterfield as phenomenal and special, not only in her job, but as a person, and expressed that she will be truly missed.

Ms. Gerard spoke of Associate Superintendent Musso also wearing many different hats over the years, and how every single time she takes on a new hat, she becomes an expert and does an amazing job. Ms. Gerard isn’t sure how Associate Superintendent Musso does it all. Their work and conversations together have meant so much and while she is happy for Associate Superintendent Musso, she will be truly missed. Ms. Gerard expressed being happy that Associate Superintendent Musso is retiring and going to enjoy her family, including having two married daughters and hopefully grandchildren down the road. She thanked Associate Superintendent Musso for all she has done and for being a personal friend person which has been truly appreciated.

Board President Camacho

Board President Camacho shared he was happy to celebrate teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. It has been an unexpected bonus to have Ms. Pellizzari at each Board meeting, and he looks forward to her attendance. He discussed how teachers such as Ms. Carroll are phenomenal, and he wished Happy Teacher Appreciation Week to the teachers.

Board President Camacho informed he was looking forward to the Kent Awards, which started as just a little idea to have SMCOE help out, and how the staff stepped right in. It will be an exciting event, and he hopes to see others in attendance.

Board President Camacho simply thanked Deputy Superintendent Porterfield and Associate Superintendent Musso, reminding everyone that he cannot speak at length when the news is too fresh. He will have many more things to say in the future about what these two leaders have meant to him.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m. Board President Camacho announced the next regular meeting would take place on Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Nancy Magee, Secretary

jlp