MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: March 2, 2022
Meeting Location: Held Remotely
Board Members Present: Susan Alvaro, Chelsea Bonini, Hector Camacho, Jr., Jim Cannon, Beverly Gerard, Ted Lempert, Joe Ross
Staff Officials Present: Nancy Magee, Secretary
Jennifer Perna, Executive Assistant
Other Staff Present: Kevin Bultema, Marco Chávez, Niambi Clay, Claire Cunningham, Jenéé Littrell, Patricia Love, Tami Moore, Alyson Suzuki, Mary Yung
Youth Commissioner Liaison Present: Austin Willis

1. OPENING ITEMS
   A. Call to Order

   Board President Beverly Gerard called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. She noted in the effort to increase accessibility, simultaneous interpretation of the meeting would be provided in Spanish using Zoom technology.

   B. Approval of Agenda

   After a motion by Trustee Cannon and a second by Trustee Alvaro, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the March 2, 2022, agenda as presented.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

   Superintendent Magee reported emailed public comment had been received by the following individuals:
   - Sateez Kadivar, Parent (2 comments)
   - Tracy Bonaduce, SMCOE School Psychologist
PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

The following speaker provided live public comment:

- Janice Pellizzari, SMCOE teacher and San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) President

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 16, 2022, Regular Board Meeting

After a motion by Trustee Lempert and a second by Trustee Cannon, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Minutes of the February 16, 2022, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

B. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 22-15 Recognizing March 31, 2022, as César Chávez Day of Service and Learning

After a motion by Trustee Alvaro and a second by Trustee Lempert, the Board unanimously (Alvaro, Bonini, Camacho, Cannon, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross), by roll call vote, approved the Consent Agenda.

5. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

A. Receive Report on Arts Education Month

Michelle Holdt, Coordinator, Arts and Restorative Learning, Educational Services Division, provided a report on Arts Education Month, discussing the following topics in detail:

- The SMCOE Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Plan
- The Arts as Life! Professional development retreat
- The Art on the Walls project
- The Arts and Restorative Learning newsletter
- The Art Takes a Bus Ride contest
- School climate and social-emotional learning (SEL)
- District highlights

Trustee Bonini shared her experience with the arts in district schools has been through the Art in Action program, which receives a lot of funding through Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). She asked if SMCOE had any connections with this program, which highlights parent involvement and interns helping the parents. Coordinator Holdt responded that the team knows of their work. One of the members of Art in Action was on the original team that helped develop the Strategic Plan for
SMCOE. She related she has been working with art organizations that connect schools with teaching artists trained in a particular arts discipline.

Trustee Bonini commented that in reaching out to find art for the walls and the buses, she is curious if the schools who use Art in Action are included. She explained they are resuming their annual art shows, which hopefully will be held in-person. There is a lot of excellent student art created, and she hopes they could be looped into that opportunity.

Coordinator Holdt noted the focus for the Art on the Walls project is student voice. She expressed concern that Art in Action encourages students to create artwork based on famous artists’ artwork, much of which is Eurocentric and does not necessarily reflect the diversity of the students being served. Trustee Bonini added that Art in Action is looking at this issue and trying to develop more culturally relevant curriculum. Trustee Bonini clarified that most of the projects are not copied but rather inspired by artists.

B. Receive Update on State Reforms and County Office Services in Special Education

Superintendent Magee; Sarah Notch, Executive Director, Special Education and Instruction, Educational Services Division; and Mary Yung, Interim Executive Director, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), provided an update on state reforms and county office services in Special Education. Their presentation included the following topics:

- The big picture of California County Superintendents Educational Services Association’s (CCSESA’s) and SMCOE’s vision
- CCSESA policy goals
- The San Mateo County SELPA role
- Alignment between SELPA and the Center for Access and Engagement
- Support of district partners
- Alignment within SMCOE
- Aligning for the future

Trustee Bonini noted she has a strong focus in the area of students with disabilities and what SMCOE is doing in that realm for districts. Having spent time learning about SELPA over the last few years, she is excited to know that collaboration and alignment are continuing. She expressed appreciation for the statistics around engagement and discussed how funding for the Center for Access and Engagement came from Assembly Bill (AB) 86 funds. Trustee Bonini asked what was funded and whether this will need continued funding. Superintendent Magee replied there is funding through AB 86 and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) dollars for three to four years. The team believes the work can be partly sustained through contracts with school districts.

Executive Director Notch expressed appreciation that the Board and Superintendent Magee supported the use of these one-time funds in this way, allowing the team to serve unmet needs in the county since funding is a barrier. Offsetting costs has allowed the team to partner with districts for deeper and broader work than their plans initially would have allowed. Executive Director Notch
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION (continued)

also shared that the team has already generated contracts and agreed there is potential for revenue generation in contracts to support funding.

Superintendent Magee added she thinks the state is starting to prioritize systemic supports for students with disabilities. There may be funding coming to county offices for this work, and she is participating in shaping policy at the state level to support this important work. Trustee Bonini stated if this comes to fruition and gets more traction, it can be discussed in detail in the Legislative Subcommittee.

Trustee Bonini discussed the engagement and understanding of this work with other stakeholders such as parents and teachers. She spoke of the SELPA partnership and the Community Advisory Commission (CAC), a parent-community body whose role includes sharing information with parents. Trustee Bonini wondered if this work aligns with ensuring that Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams are composed of not just teachers and administrators, but also other stakeholders.

Executive Director Notch assured this is always part of the conversation because they take a holistic view of supporting students and families. The team understands that relationships, communication, transparency, and engagement opportunities are factors which create a more successful picture for student outcomes.

Executive Director Notch said if it is appropriate, the team can make direct recommendations to districts about ways to increase parent engagement or inform parents about what is happening. The team has done this directly with one district, partnering on collaboration and presentations for a parent education series. Executive Director Notch explained this is one of her passion areas, and she is always interested in this as the parent of a student with an IEP. The team does not communicate directly with families so the focus is on encouraging districts to look holistically at their needs. She stated that SELPA Executive Director Yung could speak to a lot of the engagement work around the CAC in particular, and although it is important to talk about this, the team does not directly communicate out.

Trustee Alvaro referred to the extraordinary work SELPA has done over the last few years under former Associate Superintendent, SELPA, Anjanette Pelletier, in the role of keeping the peace when parents are unhappy with the districts. Rather than going to litigation, the SELPA has stepped in for everyone’s benefit. She noted this component was not in the report and asked if it was still part of the work being done. Interim Executive Director Yung confirmed this work is still being done, and the team is one of the leaders in the state in the area of alternative dispute resolution. This work occurs between districts and families, but also between districts and staff members. This is a large part of the work SELPA does, and they are looking for additional ways to partner with the Center for Access and Engagement to ensure that the results of that work carry through to support students with disabilities.

6. OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

   A. Receive Report on SMCOE’s 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Process

Superintendent Magee presented a report on SMCOE’s 2022-2027 Strategic Plan process, highlighting the following topics:
Trustee Bonini referred to the general process of strategic planning and the general processes compared to the expressed needs of the community being served. She asked if there is a part of the planning which mimics what she has seen in districts where there has been input from other stakeholders such as parents, students, and teachers. She also asked the Board about the previous strategic planning process since she was not a Board member at the time and a different firm was used. Trustee Bonini stated she anticipated that the Board would be more involved in the early stages, and she was curious whether that was the case the last time. Superintendent Magee responded the subcommittees would be working on identifying the specific stakeholders they should tap into and determining how to best do so. The Data Team will help shape tools for those engagements and there will be multiple types of stakeholder engagement.

Superintendent Magee shared that in the last strategic planning process, four to five months were spent interviewing different community partners, which was an extremely intense process. She emphasized that she made the post-pandemic decision to not invest four to six months interviewing hundreds of people and gathering hundreds of pages of data. This was already done in 2016-2017 so there is a great deal of data and the organization is not willing to invest the energy that would take. In this post-pandemic time, the team is focused on continuing to serve stakeholders, school districts, and students in their current work. She confirmed there would be plenty of stakeholder engagement, but it wouldn’t look the same as in the previous process.

Trustee Bonini asked if any Board members could provide insight into the involvement of the Board in the last round. Board President Gerard informed the Board was heavily involved in the previous process from the beginning. There were meetings facilitated by Fern Tiger and the Board played an active role in the process.

Trustee Alvaro agreed, adding that some of the Board members were involved in strategic group discussions. She and former Trustee Hsiao, who was Board President at the time, were involved in discussions around particular topics. They had been invited to attend those discussions and provide input. Trustee Alvaro agreed with Trustee Bonini that the Board was involved in the process, as well as the strategic planning that happened before that under former Superintendent Holbrook. The Board was so heavily involved that they had a subcommittee assigned to be part of the strategic planning process and report back to the Board.

Superintendent Magee reiterated that SMCOE is at the beginning and has mapped out the process. There has been a Steering Committee meeting, but they have not yet selected subcommittees or had subcommittee meetings. There is a due date to have everyone in place by March 23, at which point the subcommittees will start to talk about who should be involved in their particular topics,
including identifying stakeholders. She clarified she was laying out the map of the process so the Board understands what the organization is about to embark on, and she seeks feedback on the process and how the Board wants to engage. She and Board President Gerard have been meeting frequently, but they haven’t yet taken this on as a single topic. Superintendent Magee explained she wanted to take the big picture to the entire Board so they could hear how the process is mapped out and then she and Board President Gerard would circle back to discuss next steps.

B. Superintendent’s Comments

Superintendent Magee began by sharing she attended the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC) Cohort 6 Commencement Ceremony the previous evening, along with Board President Gerard and Trustee Alvaro, which was celebratory and fun. This sixth year of graduates was comprised of about 45 happy graduates ready to begin their administrative work.

Superintendent Magee also shared that SMCOE applied for and received another residency grant, in partnership with the Alder Graduate School of Education. This second residency grant will focus on early learning and transitional kindergarten. Cheryl Agrawal, Executive Director, Teacher and Administrator Development, Educational Services Division, and Alyson Suzuki, Executive Director, Early Learning Support Services, Educational Services Division, worked intently on the proposal, and Patricia Love, Executive Director, Strategy and Communications, Office of the Superintendent, helped to shape the work. Superintendent Magee expressed appreciation for their efforts.

Superintendent Magee discussed the existing residency program and the upcoming graduation of the first residency cohort. Alder Graduate School of Education’s residency programs will share one in-person graduation on June 4, 2022, at Cal State East Bay. Superintendent Magee added that Ms. Perna would email details, and she encouraged anyone interested to attend this exciting event. She indicated they are asking for RSVPs by March 18.

Superintendent Magee referred to the updated state guidance regarding COVID-19 and reported that earlier in the evening, the team put out a media release clarifying the mask guidance. She believes information was rolled out poorly by the state, with the message that masks are no longer required, which is not true. Superintendent Magee explained masks are required through March 11 and on March 12, the guidance changes to masks being “strongly recommended.” When the California Department of Public Health strongly recommends something, most school districts will follow that recommendation. She believes it will be the intention of most school districts to continue masking, perhaps at least for another month or through spring break.

Lastly, Superintendent Magee wished a happy upcoming birthday to Trustee Bonini.

10. BOARD MEMBERS

A. Receive Update on San Mateo County Board of Education Trustee Area Map Redrawing Process
Niambi Clay, in her role as Secretary to the County Committee on School District Organization (CCSDO), provided an update on the trustee area map redrawing process, focusing on the following topics:

- The Trustee Map Review Timeline
- The Trustee Map Review Process
- Current and Adjusted Maps
- The Process Review
- San Mateo County School Density

Trustee Alvaro stated she understands the constraints and discussed the differences in rural districts, which are unique and need a different level of support. The focus on rural districts is being analyzed at many levels, including the state level and with CCSESA. She reminded there are two rural districts in San Mateo County and when she first came on to the Board, those two districts made up Trustee Area 1 and partnered in many areas. The Belmont-Redwood Shores School District was added in the last restructuring, but with the change and new map, and adding in Foster City, the rural districts with fewer people lose representation. She was not saying that someone would come on the Board and misbehave or not treat everyone equitably, but rural districts are different because they have less population and get subsumed by larger districts. Trustee Alvaro stated she was not asking that this be fixed, but she wants everyone to be aware. If the goal is to show concern for rural districts and how they are different, they should not be thrown into urban districts just to balance the population.

B. Suggested Topics for Future Board Agendas

Trustee Bonini related she had not yet been on a site visit and if the majority of the Board wanted to join, it would need to be an agendized item. She indicated she would like to participate in site visits at Gateway, Hillcrest, and other sites in the coming months, if possible.

Trustee Bonini requested follow-up on the work done in 2017 on supporting districts in the realm of dyslexia. She discussed the state study, with which former Associate Superintendent Pelletier was involved, and asked for an update on how districts are doing and what best practices they are utilizing. Trustee Bonini indicated that work would likely align with other efforts and she was motivated to learn more. She is hearing that families are leaving their districts because their children are not being supported in their learning disabilities around dyslexia.

Trustee Cannon discussed district elections and referred to Trustee Alvaro’s comments about rural districts. He suggested this issue could be considered in the strategic planning work and efforts to ensure rural districts are supported.

C. Board Member Comments

Youth Commissioner Liaison Willis
Youth Commissioner Liaison Willis shared that school was going well and everyone is hanging in there, although he sees a bit of senioritis across the board at this point in the semester. Winter sports just wrapped up, and students are excited about sports.
Trustee Camacho
Trustee Camacho thanked the presenters for the reports, which he finds helpful because he is a visual person who learns from visual supports. He discussed the California County Boards of Education (CCBE) Annual Conference planning committee meeting earlier in the day, also attended by Board President Gerard. The conference will be held in Monterey and requests for proposals have been sent out. He encouraged the county office to submit applications for interesting sessions.

Trustee Ross
Trustee Ross expressed appreciation for the reports and disbelief that the organization is already engaged in the next strategic plan. He stated he looks to forward to attending the CCBE County Board Governance Workshop the following weekend. He is introducing the workshop, but otherwise is simply going to attend. Trustee Ross shared he is grateful for the panels and training being provided and thanked Board President Gerard for her efforts in that work.

Trustee Cannon
Trustee Cannon thanked the communications team for the informative newsletters they send out which keep everyone up to date.

Trustee Cannon thanked Board President Gerard for the comments she makes after the reports. He discussed how it would be awkward for each Board member to thank and express appreciation to the presenters and Board President Gerard does an excellent job thanking the presenters on behalf of the Board.

Trustee Cannon welcomed Executive Director Love back to the office and expressed his condolences on the loss of her father. He described the moving obituary and how a great person was lost.

Trustee Alvaro
Trustee Alvaro also welcomed Executive Director Love back to the office and expressed her deepest condolences.

Trustee Alvaro discussed the PASC Cohort 6 Commencement Ceremony and how she could not believe it was the sixth graduation. She still remembers the idea being brought to the Board by former Associate Superintendent, Human Resources, Lori Musso, which wasn’t that long ago, and now six cohorts have graduates. Trustee Alvaro described the event as inspiring because many of the faces of the graduates were from communities of color. These are the administrators being trained to go into the world and run schools, and she is excited to see those faces. Trustee Alvaro thanked Executive Director Agrawal; Brian Allen, Coordinator, Leadership and Administrator Services, Educational Services Division; and the team for their efforts.
BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Pelletier won the Special Education Administrator Award. Trustee Lempert congratulated both and stated he was glad they had been recognized.

Trustee Bonini
Trustee Bonini reported on Monday she attended the Transition to Independence Fair Workshop, which involved many partners from around the county and school districts. There were nine amazing programs from Stanford University, the University of California (UC) Davis, and San Francisco State University, all of which went very well. She was happy the event coordinated with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month celebration.

Trustee Bonini shared she will be in Monterey this weekend supporting the California School Personnel Commission Association for the state and giving a few presentations. As an attorney, they asked her to present on parliamentary procedure and hearing process.

Trustee Bonini informed she had begun working as an Adjunct Professor at Santa Clara University in their law school. She has been wearing a mask during lectures which has been difficult. She has never had that experience other than for a few moments when volunteering in schools, and she shouted out the teachers who have been doing this for the past two years. It is difficult and she loses her voice thirty minutes into each lecture. The experience makes her appreciate teachers even more.

Board President Gerard
Board President Gerard shared she also attended the PASC Cohort 6 Commencement Ceremony. The speakers were amazing and seeing the faces of the students who worked so hard under extremely trying conditions this past year was gratifying. She couldn’t imagine how excited the graduates feel and she congratulated them on their hard work.

Board President Gerard congratulated Superintendent Magee on her ACSA award, which is quite an honor. She related that everyone on the Board and at SMCOE is very proud.

Board President Gerard congratulated SMCOE on receiving the residency grant, which is exciting. There have been a few recent disappointments with grants so this is wonderful.

Board President Gerard wished a happy upcoming birthday to Trustee Bonini.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m., Board President Gerard announced the next regular meeting would be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

Nancy Magee, Secretary
jlp