APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: September 21, 2022
Meeting Location: San Mateo County Office of Education
                  101 Twin Dolphin Dr.
                  Redwood City, California 94065
Board Members Present: Susan Alvaro, Hector Camacho, Jr. (remote),
                      Beverly Gerard, Ted Lempert, Joe Ross
Board Members Absent: Chelsea Bonini, Jim Cannon
Staff Officials Present: Nancy Magee, Secretary
                        Jennifer Perna, Executive Assistant
Other Staff Present: Kevin Bultema, Marco Chávez, Niambi Clay, Patricia
                    Love, Tami Moore, Lorrie Owens, Kris Shouse, Mary
                    Yung

1. OPENING ITEMS

   A. Call to Order

         Board President Beverly Gerard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

   B. Discuss/Act on Resolution No. 22-56 Finding the Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic State of
      Emergency Presents Imminent Risks to the Health or Safety of Attendees and that it
      Continues to Directly Impact the Ability of Members of the San Mateo County Board of
      Education to Meet Safely in Person

         After a motion by Board Member Lempert and a second by Board Member Alvaro, Resolution No.
         22-56 was approved by a vote of five in favor (Alvaro, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross) and
         two absent (Bonini and Cannon).

   C. Approval of Agenda

         After a motion by Board Member Lempert and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the September 21,
         2022, agenda as presented was approved, by roll call vote, by a vote of five in favor (Alvaro, Camacho,
         Gerard, Lempert, and Ross) and two absent (Bonini and Cannon).
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following speakers provided live public comment:

- Wesley Liu, member of the Youth Commission and San Mateo County Juvenile Justice Commission
- Janice Pellizzari, SMCOE teacher and San Mateo County Educators Association (SMCEA) President

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

   **A. September 7, 2022, Regular Board Meeting**

   After a motion by Board Member Lempert and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the Minutes of the September 7, 2022, Regular Board Meeting as presented were approved, by roll call vote, by a vote of five in favor (Alvaro, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross) and two absent (Bonini and Cannon).

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

   **B. Receive Staffing Reports**
   **C. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 22-57 Honoring Brian Allen on His Retirement**
   **D. Adopt Joint Resolution No. 22-58 Honoring Hari Chand on His Retirement**

   After a motion by Board Member Lempert and a second by Board Member Alvaro, the Consent Agenda was approved, by roll call vote, by a vote of five in favor (Alvaro, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross) and two absent (Bonini and Cannon).

5. **OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

   **A. Strategic Planning Study Session**

   Superintendent Magee introduced the Strategic Planning Study Session and Marco Chávez, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services Division, provided additional context. Consultant Meg Aminto then reviewed the evening’s agenda and provided an overview of the 2022-2027 Strategic Planning Process. She highlighted the feedback gathered through interviews with individual Board members.

   Niambi Clay, Executive Director, Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion, Office of the Superintendent, discussed the draft Equity Statement, and Kris Shouse, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services Division, provided detailed information on School Programs.

   Ms. Aminto related that for each of the four Strategic Plan focus areas, the team was seeking the Board’s input in response to the following essential questions:
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

- Are we hitting the mark for our vision of future work?
- What do you see as strengths of the strategy?
- What may be missing?

Kevin Bultema, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services Division, and Patricia Love, Executive Director, Strategy and Communications, Office of the Superintendent, highlighted key elements of the first goal area, Advocacy and Partnerships.

Ms. Aminto shared the feedback obtained through Board interviews regarding this goal area and invited additional questions, comments, and input from the Board.

Board Member Lempert discussed gathering input from key stakeholders such as students and parents. He noted the section may be missing the mark by centering on what students and parents may need, but who are likely more anchored on events and services happening within their own districts. He wondered if that reach may be too ambitious. Board Member Lempert agreed that stakeholder engagement is hearing from students and parents, but in this context of a county office plan, it might be confusing. The concerns of district students and families may involve issues over which the County Office has no authority.

Deputy Superintendent Chávez; Dr. Mary Yung, Executive Director, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA); and Erica Ng, Coordinator, Inclusive Education, Educational Services Division; shared about the second goal area, Whole Child, Aligned Student Outcomes.

Ms. Aminto shared the feedback obtained through Board interviews in this focus area and invited additional questions, comments, and input from the Board.

Board President Gerard asked if questions would be answered tonight or if staff was just recording the Board’s feedback. Ms. Aminto said that staff would take the Board’s feedback, comments, and suggestions, and then consider how to address them in the plan.

Board President Gerard asked what is meant by the term “tiered supports.” Deputy Superintendent Chávez responded that tiered supports refer to increasing interventions and services as students demonstrate more need. He explained there are Tier 1 services from the County Office of Education that are provided to all districts. Some districts need additional Tier 2 focused services and supports based on their identified needs. Essentially, the teams want to identify districts’ needs and provide the necessary resources.

Board Member Alvaro asked if the team was talking about County Office students or all students in the county. Deputy Superintendent Chávez confirmed the plan referred to all students in the county.

Board Member Alvaro asked how district governance fits in because the County Office does not tell districts what to do based on student feedback. She discussed how San Mateo County has robust public health and mental health systems with many providers and asked how we ensure we are providing the services that students need without reinventing the wheel. Deputy Superintendent Chávez explained the County Office relies on being in partnership with districts and using a
collaborative approach. He added the team also works to partner with organizations which have identified resources.

Board Member Alvaro spoke of her days with the Peninsula Partnership before it became the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. They worked within their own communities and countywide to identify holes and found instances where there were services, along with people needing them, but the connections were not being made. In other instances, there were no services where people needed them. In some cases, families were receiving services from four different directions. They worked on these issues countywide and while they took major steps forward, the issues have not been solved.

Superintendent Magee added that the funding coming from the state to fund mental health and social services is driving systems to have to work together. She said there is a huge push toward an integrated and aligned system of support. Superintendent Magee suggested the Strategic Plan might further emphasize the critical importance of working across systems. Board Member Alvaro acknowledged the difficulty writing a Strategic Plan for the County Office showing how to partner with agencies with whom there is no legal connection.

Superintendent Magee emphasized the statewide push is in this direction. For example, funding is structured so that it comes to Behavioral Health, but may only be used if there is a partnership with their County Office. She noted the language in the plan may not be clear enough to show that this is the future direction of education.

Board Member Lempert spoke of the Board’s focus on equity and gaps and described how national research has shown that post-pandemic, academic scores for those students who were doing well did not go down, and in fact some scores even went up because the students were at home with their parents with college degrees, who were also at home. In these cases, there was increased parental involvement.

For students without those advantages, whose parents were essential workers, whose parents did not speak English, or for families without Internet connectivity, scores went down. Board Member Lempert discussed how the United States slipped more than other countries because schools were not open. He emphasized how California schools were the last to open. In two years, when the full complement of data becomes available, we will see how far in the other direction California has gone. He expressed appreciation for the partnerships, but also emphasized that accountability is being given to the County Office. Districts who must develop plans should succinctly describe how they are spending their dollars in services for students who are English Language Learners, foster youth, and low-income, and then be held accountable for those actions.

Board Member Lempert said the County Office should be firm with districts on this issue. He doesn’t know what else to do to address the gaps which were horrendous two years ago. He does not want to be a downer, but we are already seeing the data. Board Member Lempert reiterated the role of accountability for the County Office, and which is not clearly articulated in the plan. What he is hearing is that the team is considering accountability but cannot say anything that the districts will not like. However, part of the County Office’s role is to tell the districts that we are in crisis and their plans are not enough. He discussed the County Office wanting to help and be supportive,
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

how the federal government and state are not going to say no, and being in an uncomfortable position. Board Member Lempert emphasized he is still looking for this in the Strategic Plan. The plan must address how the County Office is going to deal with this so in two years we are not asking how this happened, when we are already seeing it.

Board Member Ross stated that the specific action plans in this particular section help him understand what the objectives mean, but the objective statements do not. He feels that there is good substantive thinking about what the team wants to do, but the headlines are not catching it for him. He summarized objective one as making instructional coaching services available, however he had to read the entire objective to figure that out.

Objective two is clearer about making mental health services available. Objective three is about advocating for inclusion, which is a Superintendent priority, but that should just be said in a straightforward manner. Objective four is about ensuring that districts understand that all the above are available as part of the system of support. Board Member Ross suggested greater clarity because Strategic Plans have a lot of good material but too many words can get in the way.

In terms of substantive feedback, Board Member Ross remarked it would be helpful to be more explicit referring to all students and services and to all districts in the county. It is also about the County Office balancing its role as a provider of support and services that are discretionary, along with its role in accountability. He believes one way to achieve student outcomes is to not always have a hammer in hand. If the County Office is to hold districts accountable, it is fair to wonder whether that affects districts in a motivating, effective way. However, the County Office cannot avoid that there is an accountability function here.

One way to approach it is with persuasiveness. Board Member Ross believes there is a strategic question about what the County Office stands for if the persuasion does not work. He stated that every County Office in the state needs to start wondering how to exercise authority if persuasion does not work. The Board does not have authority, but the County Office does because they approve the accountability plans. Board Member Ross discussed using the relationship-building process to obtain results.

Superintendent Magee discussed the accountability of leadership, which is accountability for student learning and results. She believes that County Office staff are seen as countywide leaders. It is not just about the County Superintendent, it is about every staff member having a level of expertise, skill, and knowledge that puts them in a leadership role. This is not just through partnerships but also through relationships and building respect. When staff members work with district staff, the district does their homework, gathers data for those conversations, and prepares themselves for reflective conversations. Superintendent Magee emphasized that this leadership is part of that accountability.

Board Member Camacho asserted that data on student achievement is important. However, he has had moments of pause over the last two years considering traditional standards of student progress. In his personal life, his community, and the communities of his family throughout the state, he has seen tremendous growth in areas not measured. Board Member Camacho discussed how some
members of his community have always had persistence and resilience as part of their lives, but since the pandemic they have demonstrated additional persistence in terms of innovation, the ability to quickly adapt to technology, and the ability to engage with more people and systems. He suggested that when talking about accountability, other skills young people were able to do should be considered to avoid a deficit view. For example, instead of using the term learning loss, there can be focus on what was gained and using that in measuring accountability. Board Member Camacho highlighted how some of the most challenged districts experienced great successes and he wants to recognize that in the schools themselves and their communities.

Lorrie Owens, Chief Technology Officer, Integrated Technology Services, Business Services Division, discussed the third goal area, OneSMCOE Foundations.

Ms. Aminto shared the feedback obtained through Board interviews in this focus area and invited additional questions, comments, and input from the Board.

Board Member Alvaro referred to every employee having a personalized, professional growth plan updated annually, stating she was unsure what that meant. She asked if that was focused on employees growing within their jobs or into new jobs. Chief Technology Officer Owens addressed the need to better delineate the difference between professional development and training, which has been discussed but not incorporated into the language. She confirmed that the growth plan referred to both areas. The team is looking at professional development to grow the skills employees need for their jobs, as well as preparing employees for promotional opportunities. There is also training, which is the nuts-and-bolts employees need in order to do their current jobs more efficiently. Chief Technology Officer Owens reiterated the need to better delineate this difference.

Board Member Ross commented that in this area, Board input must be considered in the context of the Board being concerned stakeholders, not the employer. He discussed how in educational organizations, it is often difficult to find an entity exhibiting a strong, compelling, and consistent team culture. Board Member Ross related he had a spouse who was a teacher and worked in a number of schools. He was convinced he knew more about those schools than the heads of school or principals. Board Member Ross contemplated why those organizations were not working and reiterated how this is difficult for organizations. He asked if the team is comfortable in reinforcing the existing culture and wondered if they have considered whether there is anything the leadership team wants or needs to organizationally change.

Board Member Ross indicated the buckets make sense except for the first one, perhaps because there is an overwhelming need for an onboarding plan which may need to be an objective. He wondered if an onboarding plan is a component of a larger category that might also include the process for continuous feedback and coaching. He suggested that onboarding is a subset rather than a superset, but that was for the team to decide, who might feel that onboarding needs to be elevated to an objective and target.

Chief Technology Officer Owens clarified the term “onboarding” is being used in a comprehensive way to include onboarding, orientation, and several other factors. In putting together the objective, the team felt it was important for employees, from the beginning as they come in the door, to receive
not only basic information, but to understand the culture and core practices. Seeing them on paper and reading them is different than employees becoming “saturated” and incorporating those core values into their everyday work. Chief Technology Officer Owens suggested that perhaps onboarding was not the best word to use because the goal is to include more than just the everyday information normally associated with a staff member’s first day or week.

Board Member Ross agreed that onboarding is incredibly important and can be done in a deep way. He discussed how it may need elevation in the plan, rather than being a component of other areas.

Chief Technology Officer Owens stated that Board Member Ross brought up excellent points about circling back in terms of core practices and continual input. She explained that rather than onboarding being “one and done,” it should be a continual process to revisit core practices and deepen knowledge. Through this, there can be a process through which employees contribute to the evolution of the core practices.

Board President Gerard spoke of her 40 years of experience in Human Resources and emphasized the importance of the onboarding process and developing culture with new employees from the beginning. She explained that employees’ experiences within the first two weeks in a new environment will determine whether they stay or leave. Therefore, this area is a core component of what the County Office can do to help employees understand the culture and feel welcomed and part of the team. Board President Gerard related that creating and consistently employing a strong onboarding process is key, regardless of whether there is one employee or five employees starting.

Associate Superintendent Shouse and Tami Moore, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources, discussed in detail the fourth focus area, Workforce for Student Success.

Ms. Aminto shared the feedback obtained through Board interviews in this focus area and invited additional questions, comments, and input from the Board.

Board Member Alvaro commented that item number two about the educator workforce is confusing, and asked whether it applied to the County Office workforce or to the entire workforce in San Mateo County, including professions such as carpenters and engineers. Associate Superintendent Moore confirmed that the team is focused on the workforce within the county, looking at how to develop current employees, identify their passions, and help them with their own professional growth. Board Member Alvaro suggested language focusing on the County Office, otherwise it feels like it applies to everyone.

Superintendent Magee added that the Teacher Residency Program invites district participation. Board Member Alvaro suggested language about this area applying to the “educational workforce.” Superintendent Magee agreed the language should read “educational workforce in San Mateo County.” Board Member Alvaro indicated this would clearly show a focus on the education workforce in San Mateo County.

Board Member Ross discussed the ambitious content in the buckets. He explained that objective one was about a combination of identifying barriers and developing pathways, which overlaps
with objective two. Board Member Ross asked if objective two was focused on existing workforce development and objective one was about growing the workforce. Associate Superintendent Shouse confirmed that was accurate but they would analyze the language further. She affirmed that objective one was about the workforce, addressing barriers, and forward-thinking about what has not been in play at this point. Objective two focuses on those with whom the team already has touch points.

Board Member Ross referred to objective one, discussed what it means to develop a diverse workforce, and asked what the team is aiming towards. He related he is drawn to thinking intentionally about the correlation between the demographics and identities of the workforce and students. Board Member Ross referred to research demonstrating how this correlation is significant and shared that these comparisons are rarely made side-by-side. He suggested being more specific about seeking data and information uncovering how far along the path we are in achieving a match between adults and students in terms of their identities and connectedness to each other.

Associate Superintendent Shouse noted the suggestion and confirmed this is where the team is heading, including the work with Career Technical Education (CTE) on that side of the fence. She discussed pulling individuals into education and creating spaces for students with adults who look like those in their communities and speak the same languages. The team understands the need to have more Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members in the teaching and paraeducator workforce to better represent students.

Ms. Aminto thanked the Board for their time and thoughtful participation in gathering feedback, which will be incredibly helpful in moving forward.

Board President Gerard thanked Ms. Aminto for her work throughout this entire process.

Superintendent Magee echoed Ms. Aminto’s thanks to the Board for their engagement and said she looks forward to continuing the work together. The team is excited to move forward to refine, polish, and share out along the way. She shared at the Board retreat, the Board will determine their priorities in working to accomplish their goals, hopefully through the lens of the Strategic Plan.

Board President Gerard thanked the Board for their comments and participation.

6. **BOARD MEMBERS**

   A. Adopt Resolution No. 22-59 Implementing Board Policy BP 9250 to Compensate Jim Cannon for His Absence from the September 7, 2022, Special Board Meeting Due to Illness

After a motion by Board Member Ross and a second by Board Member Lempert, Resolution No. 22-59 was approved, by roll call vote, by a vote of five in favor (Alvaro, Camacho, Gerard, Lempert, and Ross) and two absent (Bonini and Cannon).
B. Board Member Comments

Board Member Ross
Board Member Ross shared the panels and representation of the County Office in Monterey for the California County Board of Education (CCBE) Conference were extraordinary. He felt privileged to be part of the presentations, but the stars were the staff who participated. Board Member Ross thanked the staff for showing off how amazing the County Office is and for serving as examples for the rest of the state. He also thanked everyone who attended the conference.

Board Member Ross indicated one of his highlights was interacting with the California County Superintendents and engaging with trustees and superintendents throughout the state. They came together around a commitment to share governance, collaborate around efficacy, and discuss opportunities for training. There was a great deal of optimism in the room and working relationships were strengthened. Board Member Ross thanked Superintendent Magee for being a part of that process and shared that he is optimistic about where it will lead.

Board Member Alvaro
Board Member Alvaro thanked those who have been a part of the Strategic Planning process for their thoughtfulness and hard work, including listening to the Board’s feedback, which was appreciated.

Board Member Alvaro reported that the previous Thursday she virtually attended San Mateo County’s Immigration Forum. She knew two of the panelists well, and the presentations were amazing. Supervisor Don Horsley kicked off the event and emphasized the county’s commitment to welcoming immigrants and making them part of the community. Board Member Alvaro described the varied experiences of the panelists, but also how they shared a lot of common ground.

The panelists described the benefits obtained from two main sources: 1) adult school, particularly the San Mateo High School District Adult School, and 2) the libraries and being greeted by friendly librarians who were there to answer questions, lead them to resources, and help them log on. For the panelists, the biggest challenge was experiencing racism, at times even from teachers. Board Member Alvaro reported the panelists were enthusiastic, excited, and happy to be a part of the county and community. She hopes to download the accompanying slides to share with the Board.

Board Member Lempert
Board Member Lempert thanked the team for their hard work in the Strategic Planning process, echoed Superintendent Magee’s comments about how the team is viewed across the county by their education peers, and expressed appreciation to the team for listening to the Board’s advice.

Board Member Camacho
Board Member Camacho echoed his colleagues’ comments.

Board President Gerard
Board President Gerard shared she felt privileged to attend the Employee Recognition Event earlier that day, which was a wonderful celebration. She described how Superintendent Magee and Core
BOARD MEMBERS (continued)

Cabinet dressed up in costumes and congratulated all those recognized, including Board Member Alvaro and Board Member Camacho.

Board President Gerard congratulated Board Member Ross and Board Member Camacho for their work on the wonderful and well-attended CCBE Conference. There were many interesting sessions to attend and she felt honored to participate in the excellent presentation on the County Office’s Center for Access and Engagement with Sarah Notch, Executive Director, Special Education and Instruction, Educational Services Division; Kris Carroll, Coordinator, Special Education and Instruction, Educational Services Division; and Superintendent Magee. The team put in a tremendous amount of time and effort and shared their expertise. Board President Gerard said even though it was the last session on Saturday, more than 25 people attended. The team received rave reviews and positive comments. She congratulated everyone on a successful conference.

Board President Gerard expressed appreciation for being able to participate and make comments in the Strategic Planning process. She indicated it is obvious that the team has listened because many of the Board’s comments have been incorporated and she thanked the team.

Board President Gerard passed along a request from Board Member Bonini, asking if the Proposition 1 resolution would be included on the Consent Agenda for the October 12 meeting. Superintendent Magee confirmed it is on the October 12 agenda as a discussion item under the Board section.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m. Board President Gerard announced the next Regular Meeting would take place on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

Nancy Magee, Secretary

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