



Ventura Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February 18, 2021
MINUTES

Call to Order

In accordance with Governor Newsom's executive orders of social distancing due to the COVID-19, the Special Board of Education meeting was held on Thursday, February 18, 2021, as a teleconference/video conference meeting where one or more members participated. The public had the opportunity to submit their public comment via the public comments email address or live via the Zoom platform. The public streaming of the special Board meeting was made available through the Ventura Adult and Continuing Education, TDC Studios YouTube Channel. Those in attendance were:

Board President	Ms. Velma Lomax
Board Vice President	Mr. Matt Almaraz
Board Member	Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez
Board Member	Ms. Amy Callahan
Board Member	Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Superintendent	Dr. Roger Rice
Asst. Supt. /Certificated HR	Dr. Jeff Davis
Asst. Supt. /Bus. Services	Ms. Rebecca Chandler
General Counsel	Mr. Anthony Ramos

Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Matt Almaraz and passed on a roll call vote of 5 – 0 to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: Ms. Velma Lomax, Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg
Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

REGULAR SESSION - 9:05 a.m.

Public Comments

The following individuals gave a public comment via e-mail:

1. Susie VanderKooij thanking the Board for advocating for small groups to return to campus and urging the Board to keep the April 12 date for secondary schools to reopen.
2. Dianna Burdick asking that teachers be vaccinated before returning to in-person learning.
3. Angela Godwin sharing that she feels teachers should not be rewarded with additional pay for spending less teaching time with our students.
4. Michele Martin sharing that she would like schools to reopen and that the Unions are keeping our students from returning to in-person learning.
5. Rebecca Mosones sharing that all schools should be open to in-person learning, five days a week.
6. Ray Mosones sharing that VUSD should fight the Unions and reopen schools.
7. Dani asking the Board to put children ahead of the teachers unions and return to in-person learning.
8. Sueanne Chadbourne sharing that the proposal for a bonus seems unnecessary and that the Board should focus on reopening the schools.
9. Bailey Mosones urging the board to return to secondary in-person learning.
10. Sandra Sunken sharing that she is not in favor of paying staff extra salary and would have liked more than a one-day notice for this meeting.
11. Erin Slack sharing she is not in support of the one time bonus payment to staff.

The following individuals gave a public comment live viz Zoom:

1. Dan Nelson thanking Dr. Rice and the Board for the one time off schedule bonus for all staff.
2. Lianne Beyer urging the Board to return to in person learning as the science is clear that schools can open safely and the students are suffering greatly.

Correspondence

None.

CONFERENCE - HUMAN RESOURCES -Certificated

Presentation/Approval of Tentative Agreement Between the District, Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) for a one-time, off schedule bonus payment of 1.5% (Action Requested)

The District, Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) reached a tentative agreement for a one-time, off-schedule 1.5% bonus payment, to assist all district employees for the additional job-related costs incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020-2021 school year.

It was moved by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, seconded by Ms. Amy Callahan and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve

Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Velma Lomax. Abstain: None.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Jerry Dannenberg and passed on a roll call vote of 4 – 0 to approve to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 a.m. to the next Regular Board Meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m. on February 23, 2021.

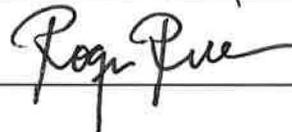
Ayes: Mr. Matt Almaraz, Ms. Sabrena Rodriguez, Ms. Amy Callahan, Dr. Jerry Dannenberg

Noes: None. Absent: Ms. Velma Lomax. Abstain: None.

APPROVED



President



Secretary

[REDACTED]

From: Vanderkooij, Susie
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:34 AM
To: Public Comment
Subject: Small Groups/Re-opening secondary?

Hello Board Members,

As always thank you for being here, for doing your best to support our schools and our students and staff. We appreciate you. My son is in an ASD classroom at Buena High School and my daughter is a 7th grader at Balboa. Both schools have been so supportive during this terribly isolating time for their students. My son has been a part of a small group for a few months now and is doing so much better, he has also been so lucky to have joined the swim team, and I see his confidence grow, his aggressive behaviors have decreased, and I see his spirit soar.

My daughter has gone from being isolated and in tears each day as the DL work is difficult to navigate and complete, to joining a small group on her campus and completing work among her peers, and she just adores seeing her Teacher in person. Thank you for advocating for these small groups and for sports. It has made a huge difference, and has made a positive impact on our homelife, which was very dire for many months.

On that note, I please hope the April 12th date for secondary schools to re-open stays on schedule. Clearly small groups/cohorts/sports are benefiting everyone, and being a para at an elementary school it has been incredible being back on campus. When I go get my student from his class to come work in my room, I feel so happy and I want to hug him, but I of course don't; I have had him as my student for 3 years and it is wonderful to see him in person, he too, is thriving in the Hybrid Platform.

If these groups and Elementary schools can be open and work so successfully, I feel hopeful that the secondary schools will create a safe and exciting opportunity for students who are struggling so much, to return in person, to see one another, learn, and be together again where they belong.

Thank you again for your time and support.

Susie VanderKooij , ParaEducator

Ventura Unified School District

Elmhurst Elementary School
5080 Elmhurst Street
Ventura, CA 93003

[REDACTED]

For the future of every student



[REDACTED]

From: Dianna Burdick <diannaburdick@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 3:36 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Please vaccinate teachers before putting them back to full time in person teaching.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Dianna Burdick

From: Godwin, Angela <Angela.Godwin@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 3:46 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- COVID-19 pandemic pay increase

Importance: High

Dear Board of Education:

It doesn't seem appropriate that district employees, especially teachers receive additional pay for far less teaching time to our students. Our children's education has suffered during this distance learning and even during the hybrid education. Many of these teachers are reluctant to return to full time teaching with appropriate COVID-19 precautions in place. That reluctance to do their job shouldn't be rewarded.

Angela J. Godwin

[REDACTED]

From: Michele Martin <legalventura@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 4:55 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Open up the schools

The unions are manipulating and keeping our students from returning to in person education. This is not in the best interest of our students who psychologically need social interaction. People are now surviving Covid 19 since we know what we are working with now. If public schools can't get it right I suggest and will campaign for all students to turn to the charter schools which the unions lobby against!!!

Sincerely

Michele Martin

Who has a senior suffering at the hands of the unions influence on Newsom

Sent from my iPhone

From: rebecca mosones <redheadbeck@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:10 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Open schools NOW. ALL grades.. 5 dys

Hello, I am a parent of three children one in elementary, one in junior high school, and one in high school. In the beginning it was understood that children would return to school within a few weeks that has now been almost one year. I have completed ALL the emails and surveys requested not to mention numerous phone calls to various school teachers and administrators with no results to get the children back in school. Due to numerous issues including academic and mental health, I withdrew my middle school child from Ventura Unified and placed him in private school. If I had the money, I would withdraw ALL my children.. I am tired of the excuses and fear mongering that are in the schools.

Many people go to work daily including myself. I am not sure why teachers have been given a special status and allowed to hinder children's education. If they don't want to return then take a leave of absence or go on FMLA... and get other teachers. The BS that Ventura Unified cares for the children has not been demonstrated. The district is teacher centric..not student centric. The unions clearly do not care for the children and care about their tax payer benefits and paycheck. I wish I could take my tax dollars and put it towards private education...get the unions and government out.. they have failed our children. OPEN ALL THE SCHOOLS.

[REDACTED]

From: Ray Mosones <raymo91@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:28 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Fight the teachers union

Open the schools at the regular schedule. Teachers who don't want to come back should not be paid. Don't waste my tax dollars on lazy teachers. The district incentivized teachers to stay home. Why go to work if you're getting paid anyway. This shows a total lack of leadership and cowardice from top to bottom.

VUSD's actions show me the organization does not care about our community and children. Florida has the same rate of C19 per capita as California, but they have been opened since August. Teachers should be ashamed for taking taxpayer money and not working.

[REDACTED]

From: Dani <dani671671@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:36 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Put Children First

Large scale childcare providers, private schools, and public schools outside of California have been able to open schools safely. It is time VUSD put school children ahead of teacher's unions. Children don't have contracts with the district or the ability to contribute large amounts of money to political campaigns. Because of this children have NOT been a priority of the district. Anyone who is allowed to work during this pandemic is working, except for public school teachers.

I have a child in first grade and her education has been reduced to You Tube videos, 4 hours or less per week in a classroom and useless work on an iPad. I challenge any employee of VUSD and school board to try and conduct an entire workday of business on an iPad. Its horrific and unproductive.

If only public school children had a well funded and powerful union to represent them, perhaps then they would have the right to an education.

[REDACTED]

From: Sueanne Chadbourne <sdchadbourne@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:44 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- VUSD 2/18/21 meeting

Public comment for 2/18/21 agenda:

First, as a frustrated parent of a child enrolled in VUSD (for now), I am disappointed to learn that the board is focused on union bonuses rather than working to open our schools. There is no logical reason that other districts in Ventura County (ie Conejo) have successfully opened but VUSD has not. This board should seek help from successful districts for the sake of our children.

Second, as to the plan to award bonuses, there is no stated need for this district bonus. The proposal also does not identify the total cost of it, how it was calculated or the financial impact to our schools.

In short - this proposal seems unnecessary and I urge this board to revisit the reopening protocol to put our kids first.

Thank you.

SC

From: Bailey Mosones <baymo2000@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:04 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Going back in Person

Good evening, I am a student at Buena High School. All my life I have been an A student. Last year, I had a 4.2 GPA and I was happy. This year I have had the worst grades in my life. As I mentioned before, I have always had A's, now with online school I struggled to just get three. Also my mental health. Before lockdown happened Buena always talked about how important the student's mental health is to them. When lockdown happened, all of that disappeared. That's the part that gets me. I generally don't understand that. What happened to them caring about the student's, mental health? SEL doesn't even concern the students. I am so tired of teachers saying that they are here for us via Zoom. That's the issue, I need personal time actually in person with teachers. My mom has reached out to my counselor several times, by calling her office, leaving messages, and not getting a response back. My mom had to threaten to talk to the VUSD director for my counselor to get back to my mom. All of that commotion was just to get me moved out of a certain class. My mental health has been at an all-time low because of this lockdown, and because of online school, and what frustrates me is that the school district won't listen to the students. The district's grades have been the lowest in the history, of the district. But somehow that's not enough to go back in person? If masks work as well as experts say they do, why aren't we back full time? The district always said how they put the students first, mental and physical, but now it doesn't seem that way at all.

[REDACTED]

From: Sandra Sunken <SJSunken@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 6:59 AM
To: Public Comment
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Board meeting - February 18, 2021

To the members of the board:

I do not support paying more in salary for costs incurred by the teachers during distance learning.

I am familiar with what it cost to prepare for a zoom meeting and believe it would be more cost efficient to reimburse the teachers for any out of pocket cost.

If this proposal has not been previously considered, it would be prudent for the board to call for a cost analysis in order to determine what would make sense cost wise.

On another note, I would recommend providing the public more notice than less than a day to respond.

Regards,

Sandra Sunken

Sandra J. Sunken, CPA
Sunken Accountancy Corporation
255 Maple Court, Suite 140
Ventura, CA 93003

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: Erin Slack <erinne4@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 7:25 AM
To: Public Comment
Cc: Rice, Roger; Rodriguez, Sabrena; Callahan, Amy; Lomax, Velma; Almaraz, Matt; Dannenberg, Jerry
Subject: -EXTERNAL SENDER- Public Comment Regarding One Time Bonus Payment

Hello!

I would like to go on record as not in support of this one-time bonus payment for additional job related expenses due to COVID. I do not understand how expenses have increased for teachers and staff as compared to any other year since VUSD has only been on a hybrid schedule since mid-December and only had a few weeks of in-person instruction. The district received \$19M in COVID related funding that should have been spent on additional expenses that may have been incurred by teachers and staff.

Honestly, it just doesn't sit well with me that teachers and staff should be given a bonus right now while my family has had to take on so much additional responsibility for our son's education. I have hired a tutor to address some of the educational loss, spend additional time on homework and other enrichment activities, and had to adjust my work schedule to accommodate the lack of in-person instruction.

I would support this bonus only going to those teachers that have returned to in-person instruction, staff that have returned in-person, and district administration (including principals). Thank you for your consideration!

Erin Slack
Montalvo 1st Grade Parent