



BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
November 17, 2020

CALL TO ORDER/MEETING PLACE

The meeting was held in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-33-20 and N-25-20 in regard to the COVID-19 virus, which included provisions relating to the Brown Act in regard to local legislative bodies, such as school boards, holding meetings via teleconference. One of the stated reasons for issuing this Executive Order was to, "further efforts to control the spread of the virus and to reduce and minimize the risk of infection." Notice was given that the regular meeting of the Las Virgenes Unified School District Board of Education, scheduled for November 17, 2020, would be a video conference meeting where the members of the Board of Education would attend the meeting via video conference. Members of the public were able to observe the meeting using a live online stream and were further able to submit public comments via email.

Board President Lesli Stein called the Board meeting to order at 5:19 p.m. at the Las Virgenes Unified School District, 4111 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas, CA.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Angela Cutbill
Dallas Lawrence
Linda Menges participated via video-conference
Lesli Stein
Mathy Wasserman participated via video-conference

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION REGARDING CALENDARING ASSIGNMENTS AND GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION

The Board Adjourned to Closed Session at 5:23 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session Adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER OPEN SESSION

President Stein reconvened the Board meeting at 6:03 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Angela Cutbill
Dallas Lawrence
Linda Menges participated via video-conference
Lesli Stein
Mathy Wasserman participated via video-conference
Agoura High School Student Board Member, Jake Goodman participated via video-conference
Calabasas High School Student Board Member, Noah Murray (watched the meeting online)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Daniel Stepenosky, Superintendent
Karen Kimmel, Assistant Superintendent of Business
Steve Scifres, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Dr. Clara Finneran, Assistant Superintendent of Education
Ryan Gleason, Director of Education and Leadership
Laura Kintz, Director of Elementary Education participated via video-conference
Robbie Amodio, Director of Human Resources participated via video-conference
Angie Falk, Director of Pupil Services, participated via video-conference
Jim Klein, Chief Technology Officer

STAFF ABSENT

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member, Mathy Wasserman.

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

President Stein reported that the Board of Education voted in Closed Session 5:0 to uphold the Level II decision.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Mr. Lawrence, seconded by Ms. Wasserman, the Board of Education approved the agenda of November 17, 2020.

Board Motion Carried 5:0 as follows:

AYES: Board members Cutbill, Lawrence, Menges, Stein, and Wasserman

NAYES: None

Student Preferential Vote Carried 1:0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Ms. Wasserman, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the Board of Education approved the Board Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2020.

Board Motion Carried 5:0 as follows:

AYES: Board members Cutbill, Lawrence, Menges, Stein, and Wasserman

NAYES: None

Student Preferential Vote Carried 1:0

STAFF/BOARD COMMUNICATION

Ms. Cutbill reported she participated on a call with the South Bay Residents Group, which covers the areas of Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes, etc. She was encouraged that we have some of the the same common interests with them. They were asking about our opening protocols. They asked her to report back to them how things are going at the end of the month. She and Ms. Stein participated in the WASC visit at Agoura High School to renew their accreditation. She spoke about the election and congratulated the winners, Ms. Menges and Dr. Vadehra. She acknowledged them for stepping up. It takes a lot of funds to run a campaign and requires the candidates to really put themselves in a spotlight, which is often difficult. She hopes that Ms. Kowalski will continue to stay involved in our school district.

Mr. Lawrence thanked our teaching staff for our flawless return to campus for our TK through second grade students. He personally has a first and second grader who are so excited to be back on campus. He recognized the tremendous work our teachers did to prepare for their return. He also acknowledged the burden it takes to run for school board member. It takes a toll on your family. It is mostly a volunteer position as there is very little monetary compensation for the work. He congratulated both Dr. Vadehra and Ms. Kowalski for their efforts. He saw them dropping off signs and flyers to the neighborhoods. They both ran tremendous campaigns. He looks forward to continuing to work with Ms. Kowalski as a parent leader in our district; as well as Dr. Vadehra on the dais in a few weeks.

Ms. Menges echoed the comments about running for office. It is very difficult; you definitely put yourself in a vulnerable position. She is thankful that the campaign aspect is over. She felt that all three candidates had similar goals and views. Ms. Kowalski is currently on Curriculum Council. She feels that she will continue to have valuable input on Curriculum Council. Ms. Kowalski has reached out to Ms. Menges about staying involved with the district. Ms. Menges went to two of the elementary sites for their walk through before school started. She also visited

White Oak Elementary during the first day back. It was fun to see the excitement on the students faces as they headed off to class. She thanked everyone for their patience and efforts in making this a smooth transition.

Ms. Wasserman agreed with the comments about running for office. It is wonderful to have people who share our districts' values and are interested in supporting our district. She feels it will be a great next cycle and she is sorry she will not be a part of it. She knows Ms. Kowalski will continue to add value to our district. She passes Round Meadow on her way home and when she rounded the corner last week, she commented how wonderful it was to hear the sounds of children laughing and playing. It was very heartwarming. It is a reflection of how hard everyone has worked to achieve this for our students. She is grateful to everyone. The efforts are herculean and it warms her heart. She is extremely proud.

Student Board Member, Mr. Goodman, reported that Agoura High School had their WASC visits and clothing drive for the homeless this week. They will have their canned food drive after Thanksgiving. Calabasas High School had their mental health and spirit week as well as their canned food drive this week.

Ms. Stein reported that she and Mr. Lawrence participated in interviews for new auditors. The district will make a decision in December and will bring this to the board in January. Ms. Stein visited the open houses for the elementary schools. This was a lot of fun to watch the parents and students together. Before anyone could walk on campus, their temperatures were taken. The signage was very visible. It was so wonderful to have students and parents on campus before school started. They couldn't go in any of the classrooms, but they could look through the windows of the classrooms to see the set up. She commended cabinet, principals, and staff for their efforts in getting the schools open. The secondary counselors came to the elementary schools to help with the openings. This experience was new for everyone and so amazing. Ms. Stein was in the WASC welcome on Saturday at Agoura High School and the WASC members were saying that teachers are learning to do their jobs again. She commended all the teachers and staff for their work. They are essential workers and are needed for the mental health wellbeing of our students. The election results will be certified at the end of November. Ms. Stein thanked Ms. Kowalski for her efforts. Ms. Menges and Dr. Vadehra will join the school board and be sworn in on December 15, 2020. They will have a farewell celebration to thank Ms. Wasserman not only for her time on the board, but for her entire support and leadership in the district over the past many years.

Dr. Stepenosky echoed the comments of Ms. Stein. He thanked the Board of Education for all their work on the return of students to class. He spoke about safety being of the utmost importance.

Ms. Cutbill commented on the picture of the Willow student that was shared with the Board. He was holding a sign that said "It has been 241 days since he has been in a classroom. Thank you to LVUSD for making it possible for my friends and I to be back at school." This picture is a clear reminder of the simple joy of a child being in school and why we do what we do. Ms. Cutbill printed that picture and hung it at her desk so she can be reminded every day of that simple joy.

Dr. Stepenosky spoke about the literature and research about opening the schools. He gave a huge shout out to the teachers and classified staff for their hard work. The principals have spent so much time and have given such great leadership. Calabasas High School had their Model UN Delegation. Congratulations to the team. Julie Lythcott-Haims will be here December 8, 2020 for our speaker series.

Dr. Stepenosky recognized our two Employees of the Month; Lauren Walsh, certificated, and Mitchell Nemirovsky, classified.

Mr. Scifres honored these two employees. These employees have gone above and beyond. He introduced Mr. Klein to share information about our Classified Employee of the Month.

Mr. Klein is pleased to introduce Mitchell Nemirovsky. He continued to say that Mitch is an amazing asset to his team. He receives emails daily about Mitch. Here are a couple of comments. "Mitch is amazing and always willing to help. He never gets frustrated. Mitch has an amazing attitude. Nothing is too little or too big for him. He always helps solve many issues." Mr. Klein went on to say that not only is he incredibly talented in technology, but he has great people skills as well.

Ms. Stein presented Mr. Nemirovsky with an Apple trophy from the Board of Education. She shared that Mitch is so vital to the success of our district. His kindness and huge heart is so amazing. He is so needed right now and so very important. Technology is the heartbeat of the district.

Mr. Nemirovsky thanked the Board of Education and the LVUSD Administration. He is flabbergasted that he was singled out of all the employees. He comes to work every day and does his job. He commented that he can't take credit alone without recognizing the amazing work of his team, from the other technicians working in the Boardroom and in the schools, to the Media Specialists providing support at the Media Centers working alongside Education Services providing curriculum to our students. The whole team keeps the technology gears turning. He is so proud to work with such an outstanding group of individuals. He hopes we can continue to ride out this health crisis with smiles and the satisfaction to know that we have done all that we can.

Mr. Scifres spoke about how the certificated individual is usually chosen by principals. This year, the recommendation came from teachers. This person has made such a positive impact on teachers and students.

Ms. Kintz presented the Certificated Employee of the Month, Lauren Walsh. Ms. Walsh is a phenomenal teacher, leader, literacy coach, and now famous Kindergarten and first grade phonemic video producer. The teachers all got together and produced a video for Ms. Walsh. Some comments from teachers about Ms. Walsh were "She is easy to approach, a rare gem, and uses her extensive knowledge. She has helped all teachers teach virtually. She has touched the lives of so many students across our district. She created fun and engaging lessons." Ms. Kintz is grateful for Ms. Walsh. She is now the language and literacy coach for the district. Ms. Walsh supports all staff from teachers to instructional aides, and intervention specialists. She continues to invent programs that continue to work. She is kind, compassionate, humble and fun. We are more unified due to her approach. Ms. Kintz congratulated Ms. Walsh.

Ms. Stein presented Ms. Walsh with an Apple trophy from the Board of Education. Personally, Ms. Stein met Ms. Walsh during a Curriculum Council meeting. Ms. Walsh and some of the reading specialists were presenting. Ms. Stein and Ms. Menges went to Willow to witness Ms. Walsh teaching students. Her joy and enthusiasm is infectious. The kids have such a great time learning from her and are so lucky to learn from Ms. Walsh.

Ms. Walsh thanked Ms. Stein, Dr. Stepenosky, Cabinet, and the Board of Education. She also thanked Ms. Kintz, Dr. Finneran and Mr. Scifres for always making literacy a priority. She thanked her daughters' teachers and the district for the opportunity to teach and learn virtually. These teachers in the district always go above and beyond for their students. She spoke about the two main values; social fusion and clear learning goals and targets. She is honored to accept the award. She thanked Ms. Tina Johnson who encouraged her to be a part of the literacy program. She also thanked Maureen McDonald and Leslie Timbers for their hard work in the technology and curriculum world who help her every day. She thanked all the teachers and students who she has connected with. She thanked members of the Curriculum Council who she partners with. She thanked her friends, husband, daughters, and mom for their continued support. She is proud to work for LVUSD. She thanked everyone for this honor.

Ms. Wasserman wanted to share her thoughts about Thanksgiving. There is much discussion about the Thanksgiving holiday. We are all making tough decisions about how we are not celebrating Thanksgiving as we have in the past. She asked people to look at Thanksgiving dinner in a way that protects our families, students, and staff. The health of our students, our cohorts, and staff is paramount. She implored everyone to make smart decisions. She continues to see teenagers from different families walking around in groups without wearing masks. She asked families to think smartly this year and to consider the health and wellbeing of everyone around them.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no comments from the audience on items not on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA - A

On motion of Mr. Lawrence, seconded by Ms. Cutbill, the Board of Education approved Consent Agenda A, Items 1-7.

Board Motion Carried 5:0 as follows:

AYES: Board members Cutbill, Lawrence, Menges, Stein, and Wasserman

NAYES: None

Student Preferential Vote Carried 1:0

1. Approved Measure G Oversight Committee Appointments as listed on the attached document.
2. Approved AYBA Agreement - Agoura High School as listed on the attached document.
3. Approved AYBA Agreement - Lindero Canyon Middle School as listed on the attached document.
4. Approved Designation of District's Agents for Governor's Office of Emergency Services as listed on the attached document.

5. Approved Acceptance of Gifts as listed on the attached document.
6. Approved Warrants as listed on the attached document.
7. Approved Purchase Orders as listed on the attached documents.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA - B

On motion of Ms. Menges, seconded by Ms. Wasserman, the Board of Education approved Consent Agenda B, Items 1-3.

Board Motion Carried 5:0 as follows:

AYES: Board members Cutbill, Lawrence, Menges, Stein, and Wasserman

NAYES: None

1. Approved Resolution 8-20 - Approval of Classified Reduction-In-Force as listed on the attached document.
2. Approved Modification of Classified Non-Unit/Non-Management, Child Nutrition and Maintenance & Operations Salary Schedules as listed on the attached document.
3. Approved Personnel Document dated November 17, 2020 as listed on the attached document.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Resolution 7-20 - Annual and Five-Year Developer Fee Report was presented. Ms. Kimmel reported that normally, the developer fees that are collected are around \$700,00. This year, due to Covid, the amount was less than usual. The report must be posted to the public 14 days before it is brought to a vote by the Board. The report was posted November 2, 2020. The report details what was collected, interest earned on the account, and what the funds were used for during the year. The district has tried to sustain this account for the last few years, with an eye for paying off our Certificates of Participation in a couple of years. We are not quite there yet. We have about \$9.8 million on our COP debt balance and this fund has about \$8.4 million. In the future, this will help us save money in the general fund, so we don't have to make debt service payments out of that account. This fund is earmarked for this purpose.

Ms. Stein questioned Ms. Kimmel about the 400 homes that were lost in the Woolsey Fire. When those homes are rebuilt, does the district get any money for the rebuilding of those homes? Ms. Kimmel explained that it depends on the square footage of the home. If the home was 2,000 square feet and they rebuild the home with 2,000 square feet, there would not be an assessment fee. There is a minimum of 500 square feet above the square footage so if the rebuild was 2,499, there is still no assessment fee. Anything over 500 square feet, the district would collect the developer fee.

On Motion of Mr. Lawrence, seconded by Ms. Wasserman, the Board of Education approved Resolution 7-20 - Annual and Five-Year Developer Fee report.

Board Motion Carried 5:0 as follows:

AYES: Board members Cutbill, Lawrence, Menges, Stein, and Wasserman

NAYES: None

Student Preferential Vote Carried 1:0

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. 2020-21 School Year Update was presented by Dr. Stepenosky. First, he showed his gratitude and appreciation for all Teachers, Special Education Staff, Classified School Site Staff, Maintenance and Custodial Staff, Child Nutrition Staff, and the Warehouse and Purchasing Team. There have been approximately 215 students receiving special education services since October 5, 2020. We now have 148 TK students, 526 Kindergarten students, 598 1st grade students, and 634 2nd grade students back on our campuses as of November 9, 2020. Students and staff were amazing on opening day. We can't let our guard down now. Safety is still our number one priority.

Mr. Scifres gave a huge shout out to our District Safety Compliance Team. This team has gotten together to prepare for the return of students including our nurse, Melissa Foster. We have done set ups, walk throughs, and planned our safety protocols. This team will continue to monitor the safety protocols. This has been a collaborative effort.

Ms. Kintz shared that our third grade students will return to campus on Monday, December 7, 2020. The principals are working very hard to prepare for this. The week of November 30-December 4, 2020, there will be reduced live instructional minutes for all third grade teachers so they can prepare the classrooms for the safe return of our students. Before the return of our students, the District Safety Compliance Team along with the Site-Specific Covid-19 Compliance Teams will do a final walk through to ensure that each campus will be safe for all students and staff.

Dr. Finneran shared that we will be bringing back our High Need Secondary Students to campus. There will be about 24 students per secondary school. These high need students will consist of the students who have multiple D's/F's as well as English Learners. There will be a certificated staff member on campus to assist these students from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This staff member will help them with social emotional support as well. These students will only have instruction for this half day. We may move towards full day eventually. Dr. Finneran has spoken to the middle school principals and there have only been one or two parents that have declined to bring their students to campus.

Mr. Gleason shared that this was the similar process with high school students. We are starting with half day and will eventually add more classes. Most of these students are not showing up to classes at all so this is a way to get the students engaged again. The administrators will be on deck to help these students as well.

Mr. Lawrence asked why other students can not get into this program? He stated that there are many students struggling. It is not really a fair process because there will be other parents that will want their students to take part of this program. How many students can we take in this program?

Mr. Gleason said we can take up to 800 students for this program; 400 per high school.

Dr. Stepenosky pointed out that we will still have to deal with the cohort issue with respect to these new students on campus.

Ms. Stein questioned about secondary campuses. We have to start somewhere. All students will be in different classes, how can one certificated staff member help with students taking all different classes?

Mr. Gleason responded that we deal with this by having the SHOP on campus. Before the pandemic, the SHOP teachers would help many students all taking different classes. It is the same effect. There will be one certificated staff member per every twelve students. Counselors will be pulling students twice a week to work with them as well. Administrators will also help out by pulling kids out and working with them. The principals will be assisting this process so we can add more students and service as many students as we can.

Ms. Wasserman asked if this was like Summer School in the SHOP with added counselor support? Mr. Gleason answered that was a great comparison with a much higher staff to student ratio.

Mr. Scifres shared that the district will continue to offer Covid-19 testing to our staff especially considering we will have more staff on campus. The test dates are as follows: December 2, 2020, December 16, 2020 and January 6, 2021.

Dr. Stepenosky shared how impressed he has been with our district nurse, Ms. Foster. She is constantly on the phone with staff, parents, community, and checking in with L.A. County Public Health. Our health screenings have been working great. He is very impressed with our health screening process. Parents are being honest and taking prompt action regarding their students. There is a strict process that Ms. Foster follows. Mr. Klein has been amazing putting this process together for all parents and staff. The area of confusion is close contacts. If mom works where someone becomes Covid positive, mom would become a close contact. Her children can still come to school. If mom becomes positive, then the children would need to stay home. L.A. County has relaxed their views on some symptoms including headaches.

Mr. Lawrence said he has heard from parents that the health screening is super easy to do.

Dr. Stepenosky shared that the Governor asked people to stay home and urges against nonessential travel. He stressed to get flu shots. The guidelines matter and everyone needs to do their part and be safe.

Ms. Stein shared that this is a tough time. Research is showing that schools are one of the safest places to be. Teachers are essential workers in her opinion. Our district has enough PPE to keep students and staff safe. Dr. Stepenosky and the Board is not afraid to make tough decisions to protect our students and staff.

Ms. Foster joined the meeting and shared that she is here for questions. Parents have been very open and honest with their communication.

Ms. Cutbill thanked Ms. Foster and her team. She watched the video that Ms. Foster recorded and it took away a lot of anxiety.

Ms. Menges asked if students are notifying her about staying home and if they are sick?

Ms. Foster reported that students and parents are honest about why they are home. She has been in touch with L.A. County Public Health every week. They are a great resource for her and her team. When she reaches out to them, they are extremely responsive with returning the information she has requested.

Ms. Kimmel shared that they are distributing a lot of meals at the elementary and secondary schools. These meals can be taken home and heated up later. There are thousands of meals being distributed every week.

Mr. Lawrence asked about the after school care on our campuses. He asked about the staffing status of our after school care as well as their safety protocols.

Ms. Kimmel stated that by next week, we should have staffing to cover both cohorts. The after school program is using different bathrooms for safety purposes. They must follow the same safety protocols that our schools are following. They have been on campus a lot longer than we have been.

2. Update to Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5141.52 - Suicide Prevention was presented. Dr. Finneran stated that about 20% of Kindergarten through twelfth grade students suffer from some form of mental health issues. Youth suicide is the second leading cause of death for adolescents and youth adults between the ages of 15 and 24. Due to the pandemic, mental health issues are increasing with students across all ages. In June 2017, the Board approved Administrative Regulation and Board Policy 5141.52 which was aligned with Assembly Bill 1767, and Education Code 215. This policy laid out practices for suicide prevention, intervention, postvention, and anything we could do as a district to prevent suicide. Education Code 215 was recently amended not only for grades 7-12, but also included grades K-6. There are some minor changes. The policy was reviewed by administrators, counselors, psychologists, as well as, Ms. Cutbill and Ms. Stein who both sit on our Pathway Committee. We are now mandated to train every staff member who comes in contact with students on suicide prevention. We fulfill this mandate during our Staff Development Day. We are also required to teach suicide strategies to our students. We will talk about social emotional wellness with some of our younger students and our older students will be taught this through our Freshman Seminar courses.

Ms. Wasserman shared that as a Board Member, the mental health and wellbeing of our students has always been a top priority. It terrifies her that there might not be enough resources to help with this. Counseling 360 has been a great resource as well as the text Hotline number on the back of the student ID's. She feels that most students would not call a hotline, however, they might text for help. She is very appreciative of this.

Ms. Menges questioned about the BP Policy. There was some information on page 26 that was not included in our Board Policy. This spoke about a referral made from grade K-6 if they were a Medical Beneficiary, the district employee should behave in line with their credential or license. Dr. Finneran stated that something about that paragraph should already be in our policy. The Medical issue impacts very few of our students. It was an intentional choice to leave that out of our Board Policy.

Ms. Stein adjourned the Board Meeting in memory of Gordon Whitehead. Sadly, we recently learned of his passing. We send condolences to his family. Mr. Whitehead was a beloved former Board Member. He served here in LVUSD from 2001 to 2013. He was a caring and kind advocate for all students, teachers and staff. Gordon governed with patience, compassion and focus, especially on the social emotional wellbeing of students. He had the utmost respect and admiration for teachers. He believed there was no higher calling than teachers teaching. He deeply respected all people in education. He loved his family deeply. His daughter is a teacher in our district at Bay Laurel. Personally, Ms. Stein had the honor of serving with him during her first term on the Board. She had the wonderful opportunity to learn from him while serving together on the Board. Gordon will be remembered for his many virtues; kindness, gracious, patience, humble, appreciative, and most of all, he had a huge heart.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Date Approved

President, Board of Education