

**Minutes for Regular Meeting #2677
APPROVED on February 4, 2026**

Santa Clara County Board of Education

1290 Ridder Park Drive
San Jose, CA 95131

Wednesday, January 21, 2026
Regular Board Agenda (#2677)
San Jose Room
5:00 p.m.

1. SCCBOE CALL TO ORDER

A. Call to Order

Vice President Speiser called the meeting to order at approximately 5:02 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

A student from Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Morgan Hill Charter School led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Land Acknowledgement

Vice President Speiser read the Land Acknowledgement.

D. Roll Call (Including Action on Absences if Necessary)

Members present:

Raeena Lari (*via teleconference*)
Maimona Afzal Berta
Don Rocha
Jessica Speiser
Jorge Pacheco
Tara Sreekrishnan

Motion #2677-1 by Jorge Pacheco, second by Maimona Afzal Berta, to excuse President Chon's absence. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

E. Set the Agenda

Motion #2677-2 by Tara Sreekrishnan, second by Don Rocha, to set the agenda and move Item 9A, Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) Presentation after Item 8A, Request for Renewal of the Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Morgan Hill Charter School. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

2. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

A. Recognition of the SCCOE Employee of the Month

Trustee Pacheco introduced the Santa Clara County Office of Education Employee of the Month, Paula Leggett, Supervisor of Administrative Services for the Integrated Data, Research, and Evaluation Department in the Technology and Data Services Division, who has served SCCOE for six years. She was recognized for her outstanding dedication, professionalism, and contributions in supporting departmental operations and cross-team initiatives. Trustee Pacheco acknowledged Paula's contributions and presented her with a plaque in recognition of her work at the Santa Clara County Office of Education, along with an engraved pen and a reserved parking space.

B. Announcement of 2025-2026 Student Board Member Appointed to the SCCBOE

The Board expressed appreciation to the previous Student Board Member, Pastrana Jimenez, for his service and noted that a certificate of appreciation will be delivered to him. The Board announced the appointment of Axel Andino, a student from Osborne School, as the 2025-2026 Student Board Member to the Santa Clara County Board of Education. The Board congratulated Student Board Member Andino and welcomed him to the role.

3. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Student Board Member Andino shared the following updates:

- Osborne School: Students began a new art project using papier-mâché which they will sculpt in clay and paint. Author Keeonna Harris also visited the library to share her life story and encourage students to persevere through adversity.
- Sunol Community School: Students collaborated with Hester School on a gardening project.
- South County Community School: Seven students are dually enrolled in a college class at Gavilan College, with staff providing campus orientation. Students are eager for their first day. Work continues on a downtown Gilroy mural in partnership with a theater arts company, expected to be completed by the end of the semester. The football season is ongoing, with two weeks remaining.
- Both Community Schools: Staff partnered with probation to increase student participation in the Enterprise program, building picnic tables for local parks. A new 12-week Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) pre-apprenticeship cohort launched, providing hands-on training and industry certifications, including Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10 and First Aid/CPR. A Brighter Day Youth Work Program also began, supporting students with resume building, mock interviews, and customer service skills.
- Statewide Update: Assembly Bill 243 was signed into law, effective January 1, 2026, removing barriers to higher education for incarcerated and system-involved youth. Osborne's college liaison, Jorge Guitron, played a key role in this accomplishment.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS OF PERSONS DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

There were 10 public comments.

5. BARGAINING UNITS' REPORTS

The President or designee of each bargaining unit was invited to present comments. Sarah Gianocaro, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Chapter President, Megan Fain, representative of the Psychologists and Social Workers Association (PSWA), and Riju Krishna, Association of County Educators (ACE) President, provided remarks.

6. CONSENT ACTION ITEMS

- A. Request Approval of Consent Action Items as listed in Item #6 Consent Action Items**
- B. Request Approval of the Minutes from the Special Board Meeting (#2575-S1) on December 15, 2025**
- C. Request Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting (#2576) on December 17, 2025**
- D. Request Adoption of Resolution Recognizing Board of Education Recognition Month**
- E. Request Adoption of Resolution Recognizing and Honoring Black History Month**
- F. Request Approval of the School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs)**
- G. Accept Donations to the Santa Clara County Office of Education**

Motion #2677-3 by Raeena Lari, second by Don Rocha, to approve Consent Action Items as listed in Item #6 Consent Action Items. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan
No: None
Absent: Victoria Chon

7. CONSENT INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Monthly Enrollment Update – Educational Services Programs**
- B. Head Start/Early Head Start Monthly Board Report – November 2025**
- C. Head Start/Early Head Start Student Outcomes – Fall 2025**
- D. Request Approval of the Williams Settlement Quarterly Report (Q2)**

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Request for Renewal of the Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Morgan Hill Charter School

Michelle Johnson, Director of the Charter Schools Department, gave the opening statement on the Voices Morgan Hill Charter School renewal. She summarized the school's history, its enrollment of approximately 400 students, and its designation as a middle-performing school. She outlined the renewal process, emphasized that academic performance is the priority, and noted that California Schools Dashboard data show students achieved average growth in English Language Arts (ELA) and accelerated growth in math. Staff's full analysis and recommendations were published on the SCCOE website on January 6, 2026.

Vicky Lopez, Principal of Voices Morgan Hill, spoke in support of the school's charter renewal. She highlighted the school's commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration, and student success, serving a high-need population with strong academic outcomes. The 2024–2025 California Schools Dashboard shows a Blue performance level, with 57.5% of students making progress — above district and state averages. She noted the school's stable finances, strong family partnerships, and effective implementation of the 80-20 dual language immersion model, emphasizing its role as a vital community resource.

There were seven public comments.

Motion #2677-4 by Raeena Lari, second by Don Rocha, to approve the following action:

The SCCOE Staff reviewed Voices Morgan Hill's Renewal Petition and considered it against the standards for renewal of a middle performing school, utilizing the criteria for charter renewal set forth in Education Code Sections 47605, 47607, and 47607.2.

The SCCOE Staff recommends the VMH Charter be renewed with the condition that VMH and VCBLA enter into an MOU and/or an addendum thereto on or before March 15, 2026, or such later deadline as agreed to by the County Superintendent or designee, that addresses each of Staff's concerns and recommended conditions identified above, including as specifically reviewed in this Staff Analysis. Recommendations, and Proposed Findings of Fact, and as necessary to update and/or replace the terms of the 2018 MOU and 2022 Addendum to be consistent with current law and SCCOE best practices, as well as any additional conditions identified by the SCCBOE.

Staff further recommends that the SCCBOE effectuate these actions by adopting the proposed resolution entitled: Resolution Approving with Conditions for a term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, the Charter Renewal for VMH Charter School, and, Alternatively, Making Written Factual Findings Supporting Denial & Denying the VMH Charter School Charter Renewal if the Requirements Are Not Met.

Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

CHANGE IN AGENDA ORDER

The Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) Presentation was moved to follow Item 8A, Request for Renewal of the Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Morgan Hill Charter School, under Item 1E, Set the Agenda.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) Presentation

Bina Lefkovitz, President of the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) and Sacramento County Board of Education Trustee, provided an update on ACCBE's first year of operations, highlighting its mission to empower county board trustees, advocate for students, and provide professional development. She shared accomplishments, including governance trainings, trustee mentoring, a student board networking group, and advocacy work supporting nine bills in 2025. Bina outlined plans for 2026, including regional conferences, a digital resource library, and continued training and engagement opportunities.

RETURN TO REGULAR AGENDA ORDER

The Board returned to Item 8, Action Items.

8. ACTION ITEMS

B. Approval of the Budget Revisions for the Month of December 2025

Stephanie Gomez, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Lauren Nguyen, Director of Internal Business Services, presented the December 2025 budget revisions. They reported that approximately \$957,000 in restricted revenues were received to support key educational initiatives, including English learner services, dual enrollment opportunities, and regional behavioral health partnerships. They also noted a decrease of approximately \$64,000 in federal special education categorical funds due to a revised allocation from the California Department of Education (CDE) resulting from a decline in special education enrollment.

Motion #2677-5 by Maimona Afzal Berta, second by Jorge Pacheco, to approve the budget revisions for the month of December 2025. Motion carried 5-0-1-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Not Present at Vote: Don Rocha

Absent: Victoria Chon

C. Adoption of Calendar for Regular County Board of Education Meetings for 2026

Dr. Toston presented the proposed revisions to the 2026 Board meeting calendar following direction from the December 17 Organizational Meeting. Recommendations included canceling the February 18 meeting, rescheduling the April 15 meeting to April 22, adding a June 3 meeting, confirming the June 10 meeting, and reserving June 17 for potential interdistrict transfer appeals.

Motion #2677-6 by Maimona Afzal Berta, second by Jorge Pacheco, to adopt the revised 2026 County Board of Education Meeting Calendar. Motion carried 5-0-1-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Not Present at Vote: Don Rocha

Absent: Victoria Chon

D. Adoption of Board Vision and Strategic Goals

The Board considered adopting its Vision and Strategic Goals following a series of three Board retreats. On July 12, 2025, initial discussions were held on identifying an updated Board vision and priorities. On October 22, 2025, the draft Vision and Strategic Goals were developed with facilitation from former San Diego County Superintendent Paul Gothold, focusing on long-term impact and backward planning. On December 15, 2025, the Board refined and finalized the Vision and Strategic Goals. Following the conclusion of the development process on December 15, the Vision and Strategic Goals are now presented to the Board for adoption.

Motion #2677-7 by Jorge Pacheco, second by Raeena Lari, to adopt the Board Vision and Strategic Goals. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

E. Board Self-Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee Appointment

The Board addressed the annual appointment of the Board Self-Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee. Trustees were invited to volunteer or discuss the appointment.

Motion #2677-8 by Maimona Afzal Berta, second by Don Rocha, to appoint Trustee Sreekrishnan and Vice President Speiser to the Board Self-Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

B. Educator Workforce Housing Research

Matthew Tinsley, Director I of Education Initiatives & Policies, presented research on affordable educator housing projects in Santa Clara County. He stated that these projects are complex, costly, and typically take five to seven years to complete. He noted that funding and governance structures vary across districts and that understanding the needs of resident educators, particularly more experienced teachers, is critical. Participating districts reported benefits in recruitment, employee satisfaction, and occasionally financial returns, without experiencing major financial problems. Next steps include continuing research, engaging additional districts, and collaborating with the California School Boards Association (CSBA) to explore available educator housing resources.

C. Employee Compensation Increase Exceeds the EC 1302 (a) Limit

Roger D. Gallizzi, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presented the employee compensation increases that exceed the Education Code 1302(a) limit. He stated that the increases were primarily due to promotions, including a notable transfer of an employee from the Psychologists and Social Workers Association (PSWA) bargaining unit to the Association of County Educators (ACE) bargaining unit, for which the individual was qualified for either unit.

D. Board of Trustees Head Start/Early Head Start Governance Training

Dr. Matt Wayne, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and Kristen Lee, Manager of Planning and Support for Early Learning Services, provided training on the Head Start Program Performance Standards, reviewing the governing board's responsibilities for program oversight, policy and procedure approval, and compliance with federal regulations.

E. Future Agenda Items

Trustee Sreekrishnan requested an update on student board representation and asked that both the former "Student Board Advisory" and current "Additional Student Board Representation" items remain on the list.

10. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Committee members may provide or report on recent committee activities.

Vice President Speiser reported that at the Head Start Policy Council meeting, parents shared positive experiences. She also noted that the Policy Development Subcommittee reviewed about five policies, which are expected to be presented to the board at the next meeting.

Trustee Sreekrishnan reported that the Warmenhoven Advisory Committee met on January 9, 2026, reviewing behavior supports, program growth, and community impact. The committee highlighted increased partnerships and services, significant Warmline usage, and updates on multiple grant initiatives, including the newly awarded Statewide Technical Assistance for Charter Schools (STACS) grant.

11. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER REPORTS

Trustee Sreekrishnan reported attending the Silicon Valley Reads kickoff, highlighted a recent news article regarding Homestead High students' fast fashion initiative, and presented awards at the 6th District PTA Reflections Ceremony

Trustee Berta reported visiting Discovery Charter Falcon with Trustee Pacheco and appreciated seeing the classrooms and unique programs firsthand.

Vice President Speiser reported touring Opportunity Youth Academy's Snell and Parkmoor locations to see the charter school programs in action. She participated in meetings with Assembly members and State Senators through the Santa Clara County School Boards Association's Legislative Action Committee, representing all 31 districts and providing input on future leadership of the association.

12. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. The superintendent may give a report on any activities related to his duties.

Dr. Toston reported that the Sunol Community School Program at Chandler Tripp will remain there through at least 2026-27 while alternatives are explored. He highlighted participation in Silicon Valley Reads and other community events, acknowledged Opportunity Youth Academy site visits, and noted that the internal budget process has begun following the Governor's January budget.

13. CLOSED SESSION

The Board moved to a Closed Session at approximately 7:51 p.m. Vice President Speiser called Closed Session to order at 8:00 p.m. and called roll. All trustees were present, except for President Chon.

- A. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Filed on Behalf of Student, Resident District: Franklin McKinley School District, Desired District: San Jose Unified School District**
- B. Interdistrict Attendance Appeal Filed on Behalf of Student, Resident District: Campbell Union School District, Desired District: San Jose Unified School District**
- C. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (Gov. Code § 54956.9(d)(1)): Case No. 24CV449859, Santa Clara County Superior Court**
- D. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (Gov. Code § 54956.9(d)(1)): Case No. 5:24-cv-08527, U.S. District Court, Northern District of California**
- E. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation/Significant Exposure to Litigation (Gov. Code § 54956.9(d)(2)): 1 case**
- F. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation (Gov. Code § 54956.9(b)): 1 case**

14. OPEN SESSION (Immediately Following Closed Session)

A. Report of Actions Taken in Closed Session

The Board concluded the Closed Session at 10:11 p.m. and reconvened the Open Session at approximately 10:14 p.m.

Vice President Speiser indicated that in the matter of 13A, the Board voted to approve the interdistrict transfer appeal.

Motion #2677-9 by Tara Sreekrishnan, second by Jorge Pacheco, to approve the appeal based on factor 12 for the length of time through 5th grade. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

Vice President Speiser indicated that in the matter of 13B, the Board voted to approve the interdistrict transfer appeal.

Motion #2677-10 by Tara Sreekrishnan, second by Raeena Lari, to approve the appeal based on factor 12 for the length of time through 5th grade. Motion carried 4-2-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: Maimona Afzal Berta, Jorge Pacheco

Absent: Victoria Chon

Vice President Speiser indicated that there were no reportable actions taken on Items 13C, 13D, 13E, and 13F.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The next Santa Clara County Board of Education regular meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2026.

Motion #2677-11 by Maimona Afzal Berta, second by Jorge Pacheco, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0-1 with the following vote:

Yes: Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Don Rocha, Jessica Speiser, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

No: None

Absent: Victoria Chon

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. David M. Toston, Sr.
County Superintendent of Schools
Ex-Officio Secretary