

TULARE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

05/14/2025 [03:00 PM]

REGULAR MEETING

For the Regular Board Meeting of May 14, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., in the Redwood Conference Center at the Jim Vidak Education Center, 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Welcome

Minutes

President Chris Reed welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Mike Waters led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Reed asked that the record show that all board members are present, except Judy Coble.

2. Board Members and Staff

Minutes

Board members present: President Chris Reed, Vice President Tony Rodriguez, Tom Link, Ruben, Macareno (3:01 p.m.), Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Mike Waters, and Ex-Officio Secretary Tim A. Hire. Board member absent: Judy Coble. Staff members present: Joe Andrade, Jody Arriaga, Dr. Jose Bedolla, Julie Berk, Jaime Burnitzki, John Davis, Nani Dodson, Dr. Alex Elliott, Dr. Helen Feller, Jennifer Fisher, Rob Herman, Kevin Jessee, Jeff Lynch, Dr. Fernie Marroquin, Bob Mayo, Anthony Paz, Brittany Quinonez, Freddy Reyes, Samantha Romero, Dedi Somavia, and Katelyn Williford. Guests present: Robert Arroyo, Drew Banuelos, Kai Bolden, Timothy Florez, Skylar Padgett, and Desiree Serrano.

3. ADA ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENT

Persons who are in need of a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in the board meeting must make a request in writing to the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California, P.O. Box 5091, 559/733-6301. A request for accommodation should specify the nature of the modification or accommodation requested, including any necessary auxiliary aids or services required and the name and telephone number of the person making the request. The written request should be made as soon as possible and no later than 2 days before the meeting. The agenda, agenda packet and any written documents distributed to the board during a public meeting will be made available in appropriate alternative formats upon request by a person with a disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Written documents concerning agenda items are available for public inspection during normal business hours within 72 hours of a regular board meeting at the Tulare County Office of Education, 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public may address the board on any agenda item, or other item of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the board during the public comment period. Agenda items may also be addressed by the public at the time they are taken up by the board. The board is not able to discuss or take action on any item not appearing on the agenda. A five-minute time limit can be imposed on public input for individuals/issues as deemed necessary.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. Department Presentation - Early Childhood Education Program - Dr. Alex Elliott

Minutes

Chris Reed announced that we are celebrating 60 years of Head Start and welcomed Dr. Alex Elliott to present on the Early Childhood Education program. Dr. Elliott explained that Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program serves the youngest children and their families in Tulare County. For 2025-2026, the program has a budget of \$88.4 million, manages 23 grants, and has 419 positions. They assist new child care providers open new facilities. Last year, they assisted 71 providers. ECE operates 19 preschools. The 19th preschool opened two weeks ago in partnership with Woodville Union School District. Village Preschool is currently in the process of being licensed to TCOE. ECE serves up to 800 children in the 19 preschools and operate six kitchens. A new centralized kitchen is being built in Visalia, which is expected to be complete January 2026. ECE serves 410 children in their Home Base program.

Their funding sources are CASPP (from the State of California), Head Start, and Alternative Payment Programs. Dr. Elliott explained that Head Start funding release on May 2 and it is not scheduled to be cut at this time. The Alternative Payment Programs helps enroll families and providers. It serves 4,436 children attending around 1,200 provider programs. Dr. Elliott provided a folder for each board member with more program information.

Chris Reed explained that the Superintendent is the Board of One and takes action on items for Head Start. Dr. Elliott added that the Parent Policy Council serves as a board and review the items before they are submitted to the Board of One. Celia Maldonado-Arroyo requested that the Board receive information on how students are progressing in the Head Start Program.

b. Presentation on Cyberbullying - Kai Bolden

Minutes

Kai Bolden, a civics and economics teacher at Mt. Whitney High School explained that student are assigned a civic engagement project. These three students chose cyberbullying as their topic. Timonhy Florez, Drew Banuelos, and Skylar Padgett introduced themselves and thanked the Board for the opportunity to present. They want to teach a younger audience about the effects of cyberbullying, especially about how it can cause serious emotional distress leading to anxiety, depression, and even suicidal thoughts. They also want to teach them about digital citizenship which is responsible, respectful use of technology, and help them understand how to navigate digital environments safely and ethically. They presented their presentation to the Board and explained that the target audience is sixth-graders. They used links to stompout.org, a non-profit organization with no fee for access to resources for parents and students.

The Board thanked them for their presentation and commended them for their choice of topics.

c. Routine Matters

1. Consent Calendar

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Tony Rodriguez **Second:** Tom Link

a. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of April 9, 2025

b. Authorization of Countywide Registration of Credentials

c. Authorization of Temporary County Certificates

d. Authorization of Countywide Emergency Permit Applications

d. Old Business

1. Consideration and Approval, Second Reading of Board Policy 5132 - Dress and Grooming - Julie Berk

Minutes

Julie Berk requested the Board's approval on Board Policy 5132 - Dress and Grooming.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Celia Maldonado-Arroyo **Second:** Ruben Macareno

2. Consideration and Approval, Second Reading of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment - Julie Berk

Minutes

Julie Berk asked for the Board's approval on Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Tom Link **Second:** Tony Rodriguez

e. New Business

1. Presentation of the Williams/Valenzuela Uniform Complaint Report for the 1st Quarter of 2025 from Tulare County School Districts - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Dedi Somavia presented the 1st Quarter of the 2025 Williams Valenzuela Uniform Complaint Report. There were no complaints received during this period.

2. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 428 to TCOE for 2025-2026 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Chris Reed opened the public hearing at 3:30 p.m. for the Initial Negotiations Proposal of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 428 to TCOE for 2025-2026. Receiving no comments, Ms. Reed closed the hearing at 3:30 p.m.

3. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 899 to TCOE for 2025-2026 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Chris Reed opened the public hearing at 3:30 p.m. for the Initial Negotiations Proposal of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 899 to TCOE for 2025-2026. Receiving no comments, Ms. Reed closed the hearing at 3:30 p.m.

4. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of TCOE to the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 428 for 2025-2026 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Chris Reed opened the public hearing at 3:31 p.m. for the Initial Negotiations Proposal of TCOE to the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 428 for 2025-2026. Receiving no comments, Ms. Reed closed the hearing at 3:31 p.m.

5. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of TCOE to the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 899 for 2025-2026 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Chris Reed opened the public hearing at 3:31 p.m. for the Initial Negotiations Proposal of TCOE to the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 899 for 2025-2026. Receiving no comments, Ms. Reed closed the hearing at 3:31 p.m.

6. Consideration and Approval, Department of Health Care Services Grant Award 2025-2029 (\$16,441,206) - Nani Dodson

Minutes

Nani Dodson asked the Board for approval of the Department of Health Care Services Grant Award for 2025-2029 for \$16,441,206. This grant provides the framework for the Friday Night Live (NFL) programs across the state and the California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP).

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Tom Link **Second:** Mike Waters

7. Public hearing for Adoption of the 2025-2026 Annual Service Plan and Annual Budget Plan for Tulare County/District SELPA - Tammy Bradford

Minutes

Chris Reed opened a public hearing at 3:32 p.m. Kevin Jessee reported that the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) is comprised of 43 school districts and three charters. The service plan and budget are required to be approved annually. The total projected revenue of \$161 million supports special education services across the county. Ms. Reed closed the public hearing at 3:36 p.m.

8. Consideration and Adoption, 2025-2026 Annual Budget Plan for Tulare County/District SELPA - Tammy Bradford

Minutes

Kevin Jessee requested the Board's adoption of the 2025-2026 Annual Budget Plan for Tulare County/District SELPA.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Ruben Macareno **Second:** Celia Maldonado-Arroyo

9. Consideration and Adoption, 2025-2026 Annual Service Plan for Tulare County/District SELPA - Tammy Bradford

Minutes

Kevin Jessee requested the Board's adoption of the 2025-2026 Annual Service Plan for Tulare County/District SELPA. The Annual Service Plan includes services as defined by IDEA that TCOE provides.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Celia Maldonado-Arroyo, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 1 Judy Coble

Motion: Tony Rodriguez **Second:** Mike Waters

10. Public Hearing for Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for Tulare County Office of Education, Special Services - Kevin Jessee

Minutes

Chris Reed opened a public hearing at 3:38 p.m. Kevin Jessee presented the Tulare County Office of Education LCAP for Tulare County Court School, Community School and Special Education School (AcCEL Program). He reported that in English language arts, scores increased by 31 points and math scores jumped 90.4 points. The graduation rate improved by 15% over last year. In the area of chronic absenteeism, there was a decrease of 3% and there was a reduction of suspension rates. The Board congratulated Mr. Jessee and the Special Services department on their successes. Ms. Reed closed the public hearing at 3:41 p.m.

11. Public Hearing for Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for University Preparatory High School (UPHS) - Dr. Helen Feller

Minutes

Chris Reed opened a public hearing at 3:41 p.m. Dr. Helen Feller presented the University Preparatory High School (UPHS) LCAP. She shared some highlights including 93.7% of students from the class of 2024 completed the required A through G classes for the UC and CSUs, which is a 5% increase. Additionally, 70% of students reported having access to mental health services, which is an increase of 20%. Attendance rates increased from 90% to 96.4%. The Board congratulated Dr. Feller. Ms. Reed closed the public hearing at 3:48 p.m.

12. Public Hearing for Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for La Sierra Military Academy - Dr. Jose Bedolla

Minutes

Chris Reed opened a public hearing at 3:48 p.m. Dr. Bedolla presented the La Sierra Military Academy LCAP. He reported the school has had significant growth across every national reporting metric for the state, from improvements in ELA, math, reductions in suspensions, increases in college and career readiness. One area that they are looking forward to expanding next school year is the California College Guidance Initiative, (CCGI). They are using compassionate systems school-side to break through barriers. The Board congratulated Dr. Bedolla. Ms. Reed closed the public hearing at 3:52 p.m.

13. Presentation of the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget for TCOE - Jody Arriaga

Minutes

Jody Arriaga presented the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget. She reviewed the budget assumptions and recent changes. She reported the CSSF revenues of \$242,468,647 and expenditures of \$234,779,526. The estimated ending fund balance is \$120,256,527.51. She reviewed La Sierra enrollment, revenues, and expenses. The La Sierra Charter estimated ending fund balance is \$38,729.16. Ms. Arriaga reviewed UPHS enrollment, revenues, and expenses. The UPHS estimated ending fund balance is \$675,139.79. She reviewed the Early Childhood Education revenues and expenses. The ending fund balance for Early Childhood Education is \$5,603,073.05. She reported the components of the Early Childhood Education fund. Ms. Arriaga review other funds including SCICON Cafeteria, La Sierra Cafeteria, UPHS Cafeteria, Special Education Pass Through, Forest Reserve Funds, and Levis Trust. Finally, she reported total revenue of all government funds. Jody advised that our budget is well within the range accepted by the state. Jody thanked Mr. Hire and the Board for their support.

The Board thanked Ms. Arriaga for her report.

14. Public Hearing on the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget for the TCOE - Dr. Fernie Marroquin

Minutes

Ms. Reed opened a public hearing at 4:10 p.m. for the 2025-2026 Proposed Budget for TCOE. Dr. Marroquin thanked Jody Arriaga and her staff for all their hard work. We are scheduled to adopt the 2025-2026 Budget for TCOE at the June 4 board meeting. The hearing was closed at 4:11 p.m.

6. Information (Non-Discussion Items)

- a. Letters and Communication/Correspondence
- b. Reports from Superintendent and Staff

c. Reports from Board, Information, and Questions

Minutes

Mr. Hire pointed out the list of graduations and the flyer for the retirement recognition in the Board folders. He thanked those who were able to attend the Community Advisory Committee Awards Ceremony last week. The Brent Rast Award winner was Allison Leos, an AcCEL teacher at Pioneer Middle School in Porterville. The Linda Hess Award winner was Gloria Zamora, a parent from Earlimart. At the Step Up Youth Challenge Red Carpet Awards, the Phil Cox Award for Middle School went to Lincoln Elementary School in Lindsay. The Phil Cox High School Award was our very own UPHS and the Community Collaboration Award went to La Sierra Military Academy. At Science Olympiad Division A, first place went to Oak Grove Elementary in Visalia. Last week Reading Revolution was held on two days. In the morning Elementary session, first place went to Denton Elementary of Visalia Unified. In the afternoon Elementary session, first place went to George McCann. At the Middle School Reading Revolution, first place went to George McCann. The Lip Sync contest winner was Munson-Sultana. They were the very first act, and they were outstanding. The dance winner was Liberty School. Slick Rock Student Film Festival was on Friday. The Middle School Best in Show went to *Captain Anti-Drugs* by a student at Clark Intermediate in Clovis. The Best in Show High School winner went to a group from Redwood High School for the film called *The Orbit*. The young man who stole the show at Convocation last year, our very own Erik Navarro, was part of this group. Last night was the Community Design Challenge. There were ten teams who presented their educator workforce housing development projects. First place went to Harmony Magnet Academy in Porterville.

Tomorrow is Physics Day at the Porterville Fair. Your Character Matters Awards Reception happens next week on Monday, May 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the Administration building. Then the Pursuing Victory with Honors Reception is the very next night on May 20, also at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Hire reported about his experience participating in the California School Boards Association series on Educator Workforce Housing. He, Jeff Ramsay, and Dr. Fernie Marroquin completed the last visit in the three part series. It was a great experience, with lots of learning, and exciting partnerships with federal or state funding. The goals are to provide affordable housing to attract quality educators and provide housing for our staff to have a track to home ownership and long-term security.

Ruben Macareno reported that he enjoyed Slick Rock. He also recently attended a training with CSBA in Sacramento, which was a great learning experience, and a STEM conference.

7. Next Scheduled Board Meeting

June 4, 2025 - 3:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment

Minutes

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.