

TULARE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

06/03/2026 [03:00 PM]

REGULAR MEETING

For the Regular Board Meeting of June 3, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., in the Redwood Conference Center at the Jim Vidak Education Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, California.

Roll Call

Present: Judy Coble, Tim Hire, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Write-ins: Staff members present: Jody Arriaga, Daniel Bautista, Dr. Jose Bedolla, Julie Berk, Jaime Burnitzki, Irma Ceja Robles, Linda Contreras, John Davis, Lorena Davis, Diamantina Edwards, Dr. Alex Elliott, Dr. Helen Feller, Jennifer Fisher, Liliana Flores, Ramon Garcia, Sarah Hamilton, Rob Herman, Kevin Jessee, Jerry Jolly, Jeff Lemos, Dr. Fernie Marroquin, Mark Martinez, Chris Meyer, Brooke Parbst, Rosie Pike, Christina Rodriguez, Dr. Jesse Sanchez, Valarie Seita, Sarah Smigiera, Dedi Somavia, Kate Stover, and Samantha Tate. Guests Present: John Alvarez, Marcelina Basurto, Rachel Castillo, Josie Espinoza, Richard Hernandez, Mary Leal, Linda Machado, Hulda Mendoza, Raul Mendoza, Ron Rea, Jessie Reyes, Sherri Rocha, Maria Elena Rodriguez, Justina Sanchez, Christina Sartuche, Sharon Twitty, and Gail Zurick.

Absent:

1. 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.

Minutes

ADA Accommodation were met.

2. Call to Order

Minutes

Board President, Tony Rodriguez, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Ruben Macareno led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Hire shared with the Board and attendees that during the 2025-2026 school year 33 staff members retired, representing 655 years of services. There were 16 retirees in attendance at the meeting. Supervisors spoke a few words about each retiree. Mr. Hire closed out the retirement celebration and thanked all retirees for their years of service.

Tony Rodriguez congratulated the retirees and thanked them for their service. He called a recess at 3:48 p.m. President Rodriguez called the meeting back to order at 4:08 p.m.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Welcome
- c. Retirement Recognition

3. Action Items

a. Amendment of the Agenda

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez shared that Under New Business, Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) - Court and Community Schools, needed to be split into two items for separate approvals. One item will be Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) - Court School. The next item will be Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) - Community Schools.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Tom Link **Second:** Judy Coble

b. Routine Matters

1. Consent Calendar

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Ruben Macareno

- a. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of May 6, 2026
- b. Authorization of Countywide Registration of Credentials
- c. Authorization of Temporary County Certificates

d. Authorization of Countywide Emergency Permit Applications

c. Old Business

1. Consideration and Approval, Second Reading of Administrative Regulation 3440 - Inventories - Jody Arriaga

Minutes

Jody Arriaga requested the Boards approval of Administrative Regulation 3440 - Inventories.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0
Motion: Mike Waters **Second:** Chris Reed

d. New Business

1. First Reading of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5141.21 - Administering Medication and Monitoring Health Conditions - Christina Rodriguez

Minutes

Christina Rodriguez presented the First Reading of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5141.21 - Administering Medication and Monitoring Health Conditions. Senate Bill 568 amended California Education Code, expanding schools' epinephrine delivery systems options to include traditional auto-injectors and the newer nasal spray form, neffy. The board policy and administrative regulation are being updated to replace the term auto-injector with delivery system giving schools flexibility to use either method or both. The California Department of Public Health has also launched the free Neffy in Schools Program.

2. Consideration and Approval, New Resources Added to the ERS Library Physical and Digital Collections - Valarie Seita

Minutes

Valarie Seita asked for the Board's approval of the new resources added to the ERS Library Physical and Digital Collections. She highlighted the addition of more than 27 physical items, over 800 digital titles which represent approximately 35,000 copies, and more than 80,000 total circulations across the districts served.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0
Motion: Ruben Macareno **Second:** Tom Link

3. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of the Tulare County Office of Education Teachers' Association CTA/NEA to TCOE for 2026-2027 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez opened the public hearing at 4:16 p.m. and there were no comments received. Tony Rodriguez closed the hearing at 4:17 p.m.

4. Public Hearing for Initial Negotiations Proposal of TCOE to the Tulare County Office of Education Teachers' Association CTA/NEA (TCOETA) for 2026-2027 - Dedi Somavia

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez opened the public hearing at 4:17 p.m. and there were no comments received. Tony Rodriguez closed the hearing at 4:18 p.m.

5. Presentation of 2026-2027 County Office of Education Summary Report of LCAP and Differentiated Assistance Support to LEAs - Chris Meyer

Minutes

Chris Meyer presented the 2026-2027 County Office of Education Summary Report of LCAP and Differentiated Assistance Support to LEAs. The report outlines the Tulare County Office of Education's annual plan for supporting all 43 districts through the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) process, including training, coaching, feedback, and successful approval of district plans. It highlights three primary goals: supporting and approving LCAPs, providing differentiated assistance to districts identified for performance challenges through data analysis and capacity building, and offering universal continuous improvement supports to all districts. Currently, 19 districts participate in differentiated assistance, while several others have successfully exited the program, reflecting the county's collaborative support model.

6. Consideration and Approval, Consolidated Application for Funding for the 2026-2027 School Year - John Davis

Minutes

John Davis asked for the Board's approval on the Consolidated Application for Funding for the 2025-2026 School Year. This is the Consolidated Application required annually for all LEAs seeking federal funding. He clarified that the protected prayer certification ensures schools do not restrict constitutionally protected religious expression by students or staff while maintaining the legal prohibition against school-sponsored prayer.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0
Motion: Judy Coble **Second:** Felipe Martinez

7. Consideration and Approval of the 2026-2027 Tulare County Office of Education Local Control and Accountability Plan Federal Addendum - John Davis

Minutes

John Davis requested approval of the 2026-2027 Tulare County Office of Education Local Control and Accountability Plan Federal Addendum, which allows the organization to receive federal funding, totaling just over \$1 million annually to supplement existing programs.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed Second: Tom Link

8. Consideration and approval, 2026-2027 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for La Sierra Military Academy - Dr. Jose Bedolla

Minutes

Dr. Jose Bedolla requested for the Board's approval of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for La Sierra Military Academy.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0

Motion: Felipe Martinez Second: Tom Link

9. Presentation of the Update on the Local Indicators for La Sierra Military Academy (LSMA) - Dr. Jose Bedolla

Minutes

Dr. Jose Bedolla presented the update on the Local Indicators for La Sierra Military Academy. He highlighted the school's progress and major accomplishments, including earning full WASC accreditation and achieving two consecutive years of growth on the California Dashboard. He also celebrated the launch of a new dual-enrollment Forestry Career Technical Education pathway in partnership with Reedley College, which graduated its first cohort of 17 cadets who earned certificates of completion and qualifications that support employment opportunities with agencies such as CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service. In addition, he highlighted offering pre-calculus and chemistry for the first time.

10. Consideration and Approval, 2026-2027 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for University Preparatory High School - Dr. Helen Feller

Minutes

Dr. Helen Feller asked for the Board's approval of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for University Preparatory High School. UPHS's LCAP and community needs assessment highlight strong progress in supporting English learners, and student wellness through targeted services, including expanded social-emotional support. Dr. Feller reported improvements in GPA growth and dashboard performance. She also shared plans to increase enrollment ahead of the school's move to a new facility.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0

Motion: Mike Waters

11. Presentation of the Update on the Local Indicators for University Preparatory High School (UPHS) - Dr. Helen Feller

Minutes

Dr. Helen Feller presented the update on the Local Indicators for University Preparatory High School (UPHS). She reported positive results on UPHS local indicators, highlighting a strong school climate, with 80% of respondents describing the school as welcoming and inclusive and 86% believing it effectively promotes academic success. She also noted increased engagement of underrepresented families through community-based outreach and partnerships, as well as the successful renewal of the school's WASC accreditation for another six-year term through 2032.

12. Consideration and Approval, 2026-2027 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for Tulare County Office of Education, Special Services - Kevin Jessee

Minutes

Kevin Jessee asked for the Board's approval of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for Tulare County Office of Education, Special Services. There were no changes from the previous review. A notable success highlighted was that 16 court school students and three community school students earned dual-enrollment college credit, demonstrating the strong efforts of school staff to expand postsecondary opportunities for students in alternative education programs.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Tom Link

13. Presentation of the Update on Local Performance Indicators for Tulare County Office of Education, Special Education - Kevin Jessee

Minutes

Kevin Jessee presented the update on the Local Indicators for Tulare County Office of Education, Special Services. He reported exceptionally strong family engagement and positive school climate, with 90% of parents reporting that students receive the support needed to succeed, 90% indicating that school facilities are well maintained, and 95% stating that their students feel safe at school. He also highlighted the schools' success in building positive relationships with students, noting that court school students had a 0% suspension rate, demonstrating effective classroom engagement and behavior support in a challenging educational environment.

14. Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), Special Education - Sarah Hamilton

Minutes

Sarah Hamilton requested the Board's approval of the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), Special Education. She noted that traditional state accountability measures do not always accurately reflect the success of special education students, while highlighting the program's continued growth to approximately 1,150 students in 105 classrooms supported by nearly 500 staff members. She explained most Title funding is used for specialized instructional materials and curriculum, teacher support through Teachers on Special Assignment, and professional development to help meet the diverse needs of students across the county.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Mike Waters

15. Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) - Court School - Joe Andrade

Minutes

Sarah Hamilton requested the Board's approval of the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), Court School. She reported key accomplishments included maintaining a 0% suspension rate, increasing the graduation rate by 15% to 36.6%, adding behavior technicians to support classroom instruction and student success, and creating a new school mascot, "Goldie the Phoenix," to build school pride and a stronger sense of community among students.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Felipe Martinez **Second:** Ruben Macareno

16. Consideration and Approval, School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) - Community School - Joe Andrade

Minutes

Sarah Hamilton requested the Board's approval of the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), Community School. She reported that Community School is a small program serving approximately 10 expelled students from districts across the county. Key accomplishments included an 85% rate of students successfully meeting requirements to return to their home districts, the launch of a new culinary CTE course with students competing in the College of the Sequoias Culinary Expo, a 0% suspension rate, and an 18% increase in attendance to 81%, reflecting strong student engagement and effective staff support.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Felipe Martinez **Second:** Tom Link

17. Presentation of Annual Charter School Oversight Report- University Preparatory High School and La Sierra Military Academy - Karen Costa, Dr. Jesse Sanchez, and Christina Loya

Minutes

Dr. Jesse Sanchez presented the Annual Charter School Oversight Report for University Preparatory High School and La Sierra Military Academy.

University Preparatory High School has a strong and well-implemented early college model centered on college readiness, high expectations, and academic success. Students praised the school's culture, noting that everything students do at UPHS is getting them ready for college, while data showed academic performance far exceeding state standards in English language arts and mathematics, with continued growth among all student groups. Dr. Sanchez highlighted the school's structured advisory system, strong partnership with College of the Sequoias, positive school climate, effective family engagement, and sound governance and fiscal practices. Recommendations included expanding targeted interventions for students performing below grade level and maintaining strong communication during the transition to a new campus.

La Sierra Military Academy continues to provide a supportive environment focused on re-engaging students through strong relationships, accountability, and social-emotional supports. The school demonstrated significant academic gains over the past two years in both English language arts and mathematics, while also reducing chronic absenteeism and suspension rates. Dr. Sanchez commended the school's positive climate, restorative practices, community school partnerships, active family engagement, and stable operational and fiscal systems, noting that approximately 85% of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged and 22% are English learners. Recommendations included accelerating academic achievement, expanding college and career pathways such as dual enrollment opportunities, and continuing to strengthen behavioral and social-emotional supports to build on the school's positive momentum.

18. Consideration and Approval, Resolution 25/26-51, Spending Determination for Funds Received from the Education Protection Account (EPA) Fiscal Year 2026-2027 - Jody Arriaga

Minutes

Jody Arriaga asked for the Board's approval on Resolution 25/26-51, Spending Determination for Funds Received from the Education Protection Account (EPA) Fiscal Year 2026-2027. She reported the packet includes three documents showing estimated fund allocations, \$1,328,033 for Tulare County Office of Education, \$516,040 for La Sierra Charter, and \$745,591 for UPHS. These amounts were included in last month's proposed budget and may be adjusted based on changes to the state budget.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Felipe Martinez

19. Consideration and Approval, Adopt Resolutions 25/26-52 and 25/26-53, Temporary Loans to School Districts and Charter Schools (2026-2027 and 2027-2028) - Dr. Fernie Marroquin

Minutes

Dr. Marroquin asked for the Board's approval of Resolution No. 25/26-52 & 25/26-53 for Temporary Loans to School Districts and Charter Schools, 2026-2027 and 2027-2028. The two resolutions authorize temporary loans to school districts and charter schools and are intended to address potential cash flow issues. Although no temporary loans have been needed in the past six years, situations like natural disasters or delayed federal grant funding can cause districts to face short-term cash shortages. These loans are a precautionary measure to help districts avoid fiscal crisis in an emergency situation and ensure students' needs are met.

Vote Results

Yea: 0

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Motion: Judy Coble **Second:** Ruben Macareno

20. Consideration and Approval, 2026-2027 Tulare County Office of Education Budget - Dr. Fernie Marroquin

Minutes

Dr. Fernie Marroquin requested for the Board's approval of the 2026-2027 Tulare County Office of Education Budget.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

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

21. Consideration and Approval, Cancel July 1, 2026, TCOE Board Meeting - Tim A. Hire

Minutes

Mr. Hire asked for the Board's approval to cancel the July 1, 2026 Board meeting.

Vote Results

Yea: 7 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Felipe Martinez, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Felipe Martinez **Second:** Mike Waters

4. Public Comments

Minutes

No public comments were received.

5. Next Scheduled Board Meeting

July 1, 2026 - 3:00 p.m.

6. Information (Non-Discussion Items)

a. Letters and Communication/Correspondence

b. Reports from Superintendent and Staff

Minutes

Superintendent Hire shared the latest edition of the *Migrant Voice* newspaper, with additional editions currently in production. He announced the Court School graduation, which will take place on June 26 at 10:00 a.m. at the

Juvenile Detention Facility. At the Elementary School Reading Revolution, St. Paul's earned first place in the morning session and George McCann took first place in the afternoon session. At the Slick Rock Student Film Festival, *Somebody, Somewhere*, created by students from Yosemite High School in Oakhurst, received Best of Show in the high school category, while *Deserted*, created by a student from Heartland Charter, earned Best of Show in the middle school category. Tulare County Physics Day welcomed 360 eighth-grade students from 13 schools, and Orosi High School was named the winner of the Community Design Challenge. Hundreds of students participated in the Visalia Area Special Olympics, while at the PVWH Athlete Banquet, four seniors received \$500 scholarships and 38 students representing 19 schools were recognized as their schools' PVWH Student-Athlete of the Year. The annual Your Character Matters dinner honored 24 students or student groups, and Palo Verde captured the first championship in the Esports League Spring Tournament. La Sierra also celebrated the first graduation of 17 cadets from its Forestry Pathway program.

This year's Educators of the Year were announced, which were Lupe Acosta, first- and second-grade teacher at Saucelito School in Terra Bella, as Elementary School Educator of the Year; Maria Pacheco, sixth-grade math and history teacher at Rockford School in Porterville, as Middle School Educator of the Year; and Jeromy Blackwell, history teacher and coach at Harmony Magnet Academy in Strathmore, as High School Educator of the Year. Upcoming events include the Tulare AcCEL graduation on June 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the Tulare Community Center, the Theatre Company's production of *Big Fish* on July 17-18 and July 23-25 at the L.J. Williams Theater, and Convocation on August 4 at the Visalia Convention Center. United Way of Tulare County will be hosting their annual Power of the Purse event at the Redwood Conference on June 12. The Leadership team will be on a retreat at the Ridge Creek Golf Course in Dinuba on June 10 - 11. Bush Construction was the winner of the bid for the Library Media Center and Special Education Complex. Registration for California School Boards Association Counties Conference and Annual Conference are coming up.

c. Reports from Board, Information, and Questions

Minutes

Chris Reed shared that the Porterville Fair's Special Friends Day was a tremendous success, thanks to the hard work and dedication of Foundation President, Janice Castle. The event showcased strong student involvement, with educational activities including Kids Day and Physics Day. It was especially rewarding to see so many students participating and exhibiting their animals. Additionally, she recognized Nani Dodson from California Friday Night Live and the Civics class from UPHS that were featured on a Channel 30 Children's First program, providing positive exposure and a meaningful spotlight to students.

7. Adjournment

Minutes

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.