



# Board of Trustees Meeting Synopsis

## Tuesday, December 15, 2020

*By John Rieping, Executive Administrative Assistant for the Superintendent's Office*

Below is a brief summary of this week's regular meeting of the MUSD school board. It is not comprehensive and is for informational purposes only. Meeting recordings will be uploaded online when available ([click here for video](#)). Official minutes listing board actions at each meeting are approved at the following meetings and can also be viewed online ([click here](#)).

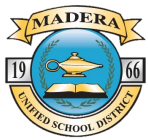
### Annual Board Organization

The MUSD Board of Trustees accepted an official election summary provided by Madera County, which certified the election of Israel Cortes (Area 6) and the re-election of trustees Ruben Mendoza (Area 3) and Ray Seibert (Area 1). The trio later swore California's Oath of Office, pledging allegiance to the state's Constitution. Trustee Cortes commented, "I am very excited to join this board especially in a trying time like this ... I look forward to serving" as part of a team that impacts "our school district and our children."

The Board unanimously chose trustee Mendoza to serve again as its president and trustee Joetta Fleak to be its new clerk. Both terms will end Dec. 14, 2021. The Board's regular meeting schedule in 2021 will include one more meeting than usual, which will be on July 13.

### Information and Reports

1. **FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA** - Madera FFA Chapter Secretary Kimberly Copland and Chapter Reporter Morelia Vieyra reviewed the club's activities this year for the board. The club's activities this year have largely been virtual, including the national convention, monthly meetings, and more. Two spring Career Development Events teams competed in state finals and the Best Informed Greenhand Team placed 2nd. At that national convention, 13 graduates earned their American FFA Degree, and Madera FFA member Deyvet Carbajal was named the National Proficiency Winner in Equine Science for his work with his family's horse ranch, which specializes in breeding and raising Friesian and Azteca horses that are taught to dance. West Fresno Madera FFA named Madera South High School teacher Kristin Sheehan its Madera Section Outstanding Teacher, and the San Joaquin Region of the California Agricultural Teachers' Association honored MSHS teachers Brent George and Julie Luxon as San Joaquin Teachers of Excellence.
2. **UNION TIME** - Cheri Giddens, president of Madera Chapter #169 of the California School Employees Association, spoke on this year's Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations, and praised those on both negotiating teams. She also highlighted Lucy Osuna, executive



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administrative assistant for Human Resources, who “did a remarkable job of keeping track of everything that was said.”

### Consent Agenda

1. **NEW CLUBS AT THS** - The Board of Trustees unanimously approved six proposed clubs for Matilda Torres High School.
  - a. **Skills USA** will bring together students interested in trade, technical, and skilled service careers through field trips, competitions, and projects.
  - b. **Latinx Culture Club** will promote positive cultural awareness through activities, behavior, and volunteering.
  - c. **Block T** will help support THS sports by setting up sporting events, cleaning up afterwards, running snack bars, and assisting with scoring.
  - d. **California Scholarship Federation** will encourage academic excellence and community service.
  - e. **Family Career and Community Leaders of America** will help students interested in family and consumer science careers.
  - f. **Robotics** will help students build a better community through service projects and volunteer work while learning how to create and build robots.
2. **PLAY AT HOME** - The Board of Trustees unanimously ratified a \$25,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente to be used for the MUSD Students P.L.A.Y. at Home project, which will be led by the Physical Education Department and will involve 9,450 MUSD elementary students. The word “play” in the project’s title stands for “Participate, Learn, and Actively Engage with a Yes mindset.” Students will have a chance to play at home using jump ropes, speed stacks, soft-touch balls, bean bags, and juggling scarves during the pandemic.
3. **STAFFING CHANGES** - The Board of Trustees unanimously okayed hiring 3 new school nurses for the District Office, 3 new Communications Technicians for Rain Creek, and a new Transportation Operations Assistant for the Transportation Department. The Board also approved filling a vacant English as a Second Language teaching position at Madera Adult School, two vacant aide positions at MUSD schools, a vacant Office Technician position at Desmond Middle School, and a vacant Budget/Accounting Analyst position at the District Office.
4. **CSEA AGREEMENTS** - The Board of Trustees unanimously approved two agreements with the California School Employees Association and its local Chapter No. 169. The first one tentatively permits additions to the Collective Bargaining Agreement. In the second, MUSD agrees to make a one-time payment of \$500 to all active classified employees as of



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Wednesday, Dec. 16. Non-represented employees will receive the same one-time \$500 payment as well.

### Old Business

1. **ELECTRONIC SPORTS** - The Board of Trustees okayed establishing “esports” (video game competition) as a team sport at MUSD high schools. Esports teams consist of about eight varsity players and a total of 30 participants per school, according to staff. The initial cost of equipment will be \$71,657.92 with a yearly maintenance cost of \$1,415 per high school. A head coach and assistant coach for esports will cost \$4,773.78 per high school.
2. **NEW CLASSES** - The Board of Trustees unanimously approved seven new high school classes. The classes are “Automotive Systems Technology,” “Medium Heavy Truck Repair I,” “The Art of Plant Science,” “Foundations of Engineering,” “Engineering Principles,” “AP Comparative Government and Politics,” and “AP Microeconomics.” Costs will be \$49,000 from the Textbooks and Core Materials budget and \$150,000 from a Career Technical Education incentive grant.
3. **LEARNING CONTINUITY** - The Board of Trustees unanimously okayed the revised Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan (LCP), which summarizes how MUSD will educate during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board also approved the budget for this plan as part of “New Business” later in the meeting. Plan and budget revisions include an estimated \$10,000 in COVID-19 Relief Funds to provide testing for staff and students, about \$12,000 to provide school supplies to each student in distance learning, and about \$2 million more (\$3.57 million total) for salaries of staff helping with attendance monitoring and intervention, such as home visits.

### New Business

1. **WORKING CAPITAL** - The Board of Trustees approved a resolution that enables MUSD to participate in the Statewide Working Capital Financing program if needed. The program enables local education agencies to take short-term low-interest loans to cover temporary shortfalls caused when the state chooses to delay its funding of schools. “If in January or February, we don’t need it, then we don’t have to use it. Nothing will happen to us,” explained Chief Financial Officer Arelis Garcia to trustees. “There’s no cost to apply. There’s no obligation to proceed.” MUSD could be lent as much as \$60 million if it successfully applies and chooses to borrow.



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2. **FIRST INTERIM REPORT** - The Board of Trustees okayed the 2020-21 First Interim Report, which covers the financial and budgetary status of MUSD for the period ending Oct. 31. Attendance is below the district's projected enrollment by about a thousand, staff said. Estimated 2020-21 revenue is \$309.4 million and expenses are \$309.5 million. Staff estimates the ending balance and reserve at the end of 2020-21 will be \$59.9 million, which is 19 percent. Staff recommended maintaining a high reserve to help manage any funding the state decides to delay. The state is expected to defer payment of about \$53 million from February through June 2021. MUSD is predicted to operate with an annual deficit of \$6 to \$8 million through 2022-23 - shrinking reserve funds to 16 percent. (For reference, a 17 percent reserve equals about two months of expenditures and is a common standard for local education agencies, staff said. The minimum reserve is 10 percent.)
3. **EARLY RETIREMENT** - The Board of Trustees approved a resolution that enables MUSD to offer a retirement incentive program that supplements pension payments from the state's retirement plans for public school teachers and public employees (CalSTRS and CalPERS). The goal is to save MUSD money by increasing the number of retirements of longtime staff in the 2020-21 school year. The savings would depend on how many choose to participate.

### Announcements

1. **PAC MEETING** - The [Parent Advisory Committee](#) will meet virtually Wednesday, Dec. 16. This group advises MUSD on its finances and consults, reviews, and comments on the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan.
2. **CALSSD** - The [California Association of Suburban School Districts](#), a statewide coalition, will meet virtually Thursday, Dec. 17.
3. **SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE** - The Safety Advisory Committee, which advises the Board of Trustees on safety matters for schools and MUSD, will meet virtually Thursday, Dec. 17.

### Advanced Planning

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING** - The next regular Board Meeting will be Tuesday, January 26, in the Madera Unified School District Boardroom at 1902 Howard Road. The meeting will be held virtually.