



Board of Trustees Meeting Synopsis

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

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

Below is a brief summary of this week's special meeting of the MUSD school board. It is not comprehensive and is for informational purposes only. Meeting recordings will be uploaded online ([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](#)).

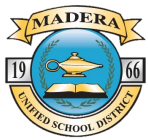
Closed Session Reportable Actions

VIRTUAL RE-OPENING - There were no closed session reportable actions. However, Superintendent Todd Lile announced that, after consulting with public health officials and local school districts that afternoon, "we will bring an item for approval" during the regular Board meeting set for Tuesday, July 21, "to open the school year in a virtual, distance learning model." He formally thanked labor partners for collaborating with MUSD on a Memorandum of Understanding to help meet safety and educational needs. It "will include key information like future calendar changes to be announced" and approved at next week's Board meeting.

MUTA - In later public comments, Amanda Wade, vice president of the Madera Unified Teachers' Association, expressed the union's appreciation for the willingness "to open the school year for distance learning. We realize this is one of the most difficult decisions you could make." She praised the cooperativeness of Sheryl Sisil, assistant superintendent of Educational Services, and Kent Albertson, chief Human Resources officer, in working with MUTA. "Mrs. Sisil has quite frankly worked her tail off," she said. "None of us take this lightly. I know I (and others) have lost sleep over this ... We know that you will make the right decision" next Tuesday.

CSEA - Likewise Cheri Giddens, president of the California School Employees Association Chapter 169, said, "I'm absolutely in agreement with the distance learning and we will be working with the district however we can help ... We're going to be there for everybody."

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES - More than 300 people tried to participate in the special Board meeting Wednesday, which surpassed the limit of the Zoom online video conferencing subscription used. "Please pass the word that interest in the meeting far exceeded anything we've seen before ... So tonight we literally had a (virtual) traffic jam (of those) trying to attend this meeting," said Superintendent Todd Lile. (Note: Staff will try to avoid a recurrence of this.)



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New Business

1. **STAFFING CHANGES** - The Board of Trustees unanimously approved filling 16 vacant positions, 7 new hires, and 3 re-hires. Trustees also cut a full-time teacher position at Monroe School and created a new Speech and Language Pathologist position for the Special Services department.
2. **NEW LEADERS** - Superintendent Todd Lile announced five newly appointed administrators. Laura Quiroz, appointed at the June 23rd Board meeting, will be the new dean of the [Madera Technical Exploration Center](#). Brandon St. Lucia will serve as vice principal of Thomas Jefferson Middle School. Alejandro Juarez will take the same role at Madera High School. Patrick Nolan will become Madera High's dean of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Anna Maldonado will be the new Human Resources Officer after being "part of a restructuring effort to bring our HR department even further into the 21st century," said Superintendent Todd Lile.
3. **ENROLLMENT OPTIONS** - The Board of Trustees unanimously okayed student enrollment options for the 2020-21 school year as part of the plan to reopen schools. These options include a traditional schoolhouse approach (on-campus), "Hybrid Learning" (on-campus and distance), distance learning, and independent study (off-campus). The method used to teach may change as health demands shift amid the pandemic.

Sheryl Sisil, assistant superintendent of Educational Services, presented four priorities for reopening schools: (1) the health, well-being, and safety of staff and students, (2) high-quality instruction regardless of method, (3) flexibility and choice of methods for parents, and (4) optimal use of available resources. Each option has advantages and disadvantages in regard to those four priorities, which Sisil went over with trustees.

All of the trustees expressed gratitude for the work being done in surveying, collaborating, planning, and preparing to reopen. Several trustees commented on how quickly the pandemic situation has been changing. Some trustees wanted more COVID-19 testing to better understand the risks. One trustee shared dissatisfaction with the independent learning model.