



Board of Trustees Meeting Synopsis

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

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 ([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](#)).

Student Trustee Report

STALLION SURVEY - Trustee Sophia Nassar of Madera South High School shared about an October survey that a third of her fellow MSHS students filled out. She said she was happy to report that answers leaned positive regarding the school environment and what could be done to better it. She said the feedback and a partnership with [Safe School Ambassadors](#) would be used to improve MSHS.

Information and Reports

1. **MATH & READING SCORES** - Staff presented a lengthy review of baseline data from [the most recent math and reading assessment](#) of elementary schools by the [Northwest Evaluation Association](#) (NWEA) and explained the "[Improvement Science](#)" process. This fall, the district's elementary student reading scores improved when comparing higher grade levels to lower ones, but there was less growth in math scores, staff said. Districtwide, more than 56% of district elementary, middle, and high school students were assessed as "far below" or "below" their expected reading level this fall and 70% as "far below" or "below" in math. The district's scores are in the bottom 10th percentile nationally, said Superintendent Todd Lile in answer to a trustee question.

NWEA scores from this fall will be compared to later assessments this coming winter and spring to track progress.

To analyze the root cause of a school's results, site Strategic Academic Planning teams explore why academic problems exist, organize causes into themes to find patterns, and identify only causes within the district's control, staff said. This helps them to not simply find a possible solution but also to clearly specify what they want to accomplish. This enables them to turn their response to problems into measurable actions and to commit to the changes needed. Staff said the cycle could be summed up as plan, do, study, and act.

2. **RIGOR & RELEVANCE REPORT** - Staff presented the results of a 2020-21 audit by nonprofit [WestEd](#) of district-approved curriculum and materials. Due to the pandemic, the audit relied



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on a survey of 521 staff and a review of lessons and student work. The audit tried to see if “curriculum” (broadly understood) and materials were intellectually demanding, personally and practically relevant to students, and matched state standards. The surveyed staff (93% of whom were teachers) worked at seven elementary, two middle, and two high schools.

- a. **RIGOR** - Below are the percentages of staff who said the needs of the following students were “frequently” or “very frequently” met by course materials.
 - i. *Struggling students*: 37% (science), 39% (math), 41% (English), and 47% (history-social science)
 - ii. *English learners*: 40% (math), 48% (history-social science), 49% (science), and 69% (English)
 - iii. *On-grade-level*: 64% (math), 75% (science), 76% (history-social science), and 82% (English)
 - iv. *Above-grade-level*: 44% (math), 57% (history-social science), 62% (English), and 67% (science).

Most staff surveyed (75% to 84%) felt materials gave chances for analysis, judging, and creativity - except in math (48%). Most of those surveyed also felt materials met state standards: 62% for math, 75% for history-social science, 82% for English, and 84% for science. When WestEd compared lessons with state standards, the percentage of lessons that mostly or entirely aligned were 72% for history-social science, 88% for science, 91% for English, and 96% for math. However, only 13% of “[three-dimensional science](#)” lessons mostly aligned to state standards (none did so entirely) and only 31% of math lessons mostly or entirely met [mathematical practice standards](#).

- b. **RELEVANCE** - The audit asked staff how often subject materials allow students to make choices in class or assignments that connect to their interests (depending on subject taught, 17%-33% of staff answered “often” or “always”), reflect their personal background (7%-36%), or are free from stereotypes or negative portrayals (26%-42%). However, audits of lessons and student work determined that the staff survey results greatly overestimated how often this happened.

When it came to teaching about female, minority, or disabled leaders, 49% of staff said they “sometimes,” “often,” or “always” taught about leaders with disabilities, 65% said they did the same for Native American leaders, 67.5% for “Latinx” leaders, and 78.5% for leaders who were female or African American. Yet only zero to 5% of lessons and student work included such leaders, according to an audit by WestEd.



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3. **UNION TIME** - President David Holder of the Madera Unified Teachers Association thanked the trustees for three decisions made at their Oct. 12th regular meeting: the extension of COVID-19 leave, increased pay for substitute teachers, and the hiring of 30 office aides.

Consent Agenda

1. **VIRTUAL MEETINGS** - The Board of Trustees approved continuing to hold its public meetings virtually via Zoom next month to safeguard attendee health amid the pandemic.
2. **DIGITAL RADIOS** - The Board okayed using a [National Association of State Procurement Officials](#) contract for future purchase of digital radios and equipment as needed. This “piggybacking” on a contract put out to bid by another school district or agency is allowed and saves time and expense, according to staff. The Transportation and Child Nutrition departments recently replaced their two-way radios with digital radios.
3. **COLD BOXES** - The Board approved a contract with [Lawrence Engineering Group](#) to provide services for a cold box addition at Martin Luther King and Desmond middle schools. The total cost will be \$72,000 from the Capitalized Equipment Fund.
4. **STAFFING CHANGES** - The Board okayed the hiring of 8 Child Nutrition Assistant I staff, 4 Cafeteria/Playground Aides, 3 new School Nurses, 2 Parent Resource Center Assistants, and 2 teachers, as well as for 13 other classified and 2 other certificated positions.
5. **NEW LEADER** - The Board approved Linda Negrete for the new position of Behavioral Health Supervisor for the Health and Wellness Department.
6. **JOB DESCRIPTION** - The Board okayed a revision of the functions and qualifications for the Behavioral Health Clinician II job description. The clinician will now act as a community liaison with social services agencies and community networks, and will be required to have three years of work experience and be a licensed clinician. The changes were needed to “attract highly qualified applicants,” staff said.

Old Business

EMERGENCY FUNDS - The Board of Trustees approved an expenditure plan for \$68,510,279 in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) funds. Less than half of the funds would be used to support “strategies for continuous and safe in-person learning” and a quarter would be used to help “address lost instructional time.”



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New Business

1. **51 PARAPROFESSIONALS** - The Board of Trustees approved the hiring of 51 full-time paraprofessionals for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten classrooms for the 2021-24 school years. The annual cost will be \$2,970,393 in [Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant](#) funds.
2. **LGBTQIA+ TRAINING** - The Board okayed an agreement with [Affirming Family Counseling](#) to train school leaders in terminology on sexual attraction and gender identification, the social significance of differing gender pronouns, passive and active inclusion of and alliance with diversely gendered students, microaggressions, student privacy, and federal [Title IX](#) and state [Assembly Bill No. 1266](#) protections for transexual students and athletes. There will be three 2-hour training sessions, staff said. The cost for the “[LGBTQIA+](#) Education” -- which will end on June 30, 2022 -- is not to exceed \$1,500 from the General Fund.

Announcements

STUDENT TRUSTEE INTERVIEW - Madera High School students applying to be a board member will be interviewed on Thursday, Nov. 4, at the District Office. The student trustee position for MHS is currently unfilled.

Advanced Planning

REGULAR BOARD MEETING - The next regular Board Meeting will be Tuesday, November 9, in the Madera Unified School District Boardroom at 1902 Howard Road. The meeting will be held virtually.