

SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES
Special Meeting
July 13, 2016

The Solano County Board of Education met in special session on Wednesday, July 13, 2016, at the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE), 5100 Business Center Drive in Fairfield, California.

I. CALL TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Trustee Dana Dean, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:53 PM. Jay Speck, Solano County Superintendent of Schools, led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present

Dana Dean, President (Trustee Area 3)
Elease Cheek, Vice President (Trustee Area 5)
Mayrene Bates (Trustee Area 4)
Peggy Cohen-Thompson (Trustee Area 7)
Michelle Coleman (Trustee Area 1)
Doug Ford (Trustee Area 6)
Raymond Silva (Trustee Area 2)

Trustee Dean welcomed those in attendance and noted that a quorum was present as was Mr. Speck, who serves as Secretary to the Board.

Others Present:

County Superintendent of Schools Office –

Lisette Estrella-Henderson	Marnie Lynch	Kimberly Smith
Tommy Welch	Gethsemane Patton	Lilibeth Pinpin
Victor Romualdi	Nicola Parr	Kim Govi
Tracy Robinson	Jane Sinkewiz	
Laryn Bishop	Monica Ross	

Community Members –

Christina Arrostuto	Monica Brown	Ken Henderson
Dee & Alex Alarcón	Stephen Hallett	Danielle Henderson
Sandy & Mick Jessop	Joe Jones	Andrew Ownby
Janet Harden	Pamela Gourley	Ron Myska
Suzanne Speck	Jan Tomsy	

Frank Zotter, Attorney with School & College Legal Services
Other members of the community

III. APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Trustee Bates, seconded by Trustee Coleman, and unanimously carried by a vote of those present to approve and adopt the agenda as presented. (*Trustee Silva was absent.*)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Process to Fill a Vacancy for the Office of County Superintendent

Pursuant to Education Code (EC) section 1042(e) and Government Code 1770(c)(1), the Board considered applicable options in the appointment process to fill the position of Solano County Superintendent of Schools due to the upcoming vacancy created by the announced retirement of Jay Speck.

Mr. Zotter explained the Board's authority to appoint the county superintendent when a vacancy exists; however, this appointment process is different than that used to fill a vacancy on the county board because there is no provision in the law to hold a special election to fill a vacancy in the county superintendent's position. The Board may make a direct appointment at this meeting, hire a search firm to solicit applications and screen candidates, or conduct its own applicant search, screen applications, prepare questions, and hold interviews in open session at a future meeting. (EC §1206, §1208; Elections Code §201; Government Code §1021, §24001, §25041) In an open meeting, candidates cannot legally be kept out of the room while others are being interviewed, but the Board can request that applicants remain outside the room until it is their turn to interview as a way to prevent an unfair advantage. The Board may use its discretion in choosing a selection process, and the law does not specify a timeline for this process, but it is realistic to expect the process to take 60-90 days. The person selected will hold office as if elected for the remainder of the existing term.

Tracy Robinson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Educator Effectiveness, shared information on the cost of hiring a search firm. Her research included quotes from firms specializing in searches for education administrators as well as actual costs from county offices of education that recently hired firms to find a new county superintendent. The data indicated two to four weeks to interview and secure a search firm with their fees beginning at \$6,000-\$8,000 using staff time for some tasks, and up to \$33,000.

Ms. Robinson continued that the timeline for conducting our own search would involve advertising for a standard four to six week period on the education website EdJoin and/or in EdCal, the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) newsletter. A two-week ad in EdCal costs approximately \$180-\$360.

In response to questions from the Board about forming an ad hoc committee to manage an in-house search, Mr. Zotter said that the members of an ad hoc committee may be appointed by the board president or volunteers willing to take on this extra responsibility. Meetings are not public when the committee contains less than a quorum of board members.

The Board listened to comments from members of the public who wished to address the Board on this matter. Speakers were given three minutes each.

The following individuals spoke in support of the Board appointing Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Associate Superintendent of Student Programs and Educational Services, as the new County Superintendent: Andrew Ownby, Sandy Jessop, Dee Alarcón, Janet Harden, Gethsemane Patton, Nicola Parr, Victor Romualdi, Ron Myska, and Lilibeth Pinpin.

Monica Brown and Stephen Hallett encouraged the Board to solicit applications from the public and make a selection from those applicants.

Trustee Dean noted that the Board had also received several items of correspondence in support of Mrs. Estrella-Henderson's direct appointment. Letters were received from the following individuals, and copies were made available to the public:

- Brian Dolan, Superintendent of Dixon Unified School District
- Dee Alarcón, former Solano County Superintendent of Schools
- Donna Robinson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer for Solano County
- Nicole Anderson, Diversity and Equal Access Executive for ACSA
- Jason Aguirre, Solano County Family Justice Center
- Michele Harris, Executive Director of First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission
- Alan Kerzin, Executive Director of Children's Network of Solano County
- Juan Cisneros, Family Community Partnership Director for Child Start, Inc. and President of the Solano County Children's Alliance and Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Sherry Cordonnier, Director of Corporate Relations for Travis Credit Union

Discussion followed on the desired characteristics of the new county superintendent and each of the Board's options.

Motion was made by Trustee Coleman, seconded by Trustee Cheek, and carried by the following roll call vote to approve the process for appointing a qualified candidate to fill the County Superintendent vacancy effective January 1, 2017, by requesting staff assistance and selecting an ad hoc committee, consisting of less than a quorum of the Board Members, to create and implement an application and timeline for the solicitation of qualified candidates to fill the upcoming vacancy in the office of Solano County Superintendent of Schools and serve in an advisory capacity to the full Board. (AYES (4): Trustees Coleman, Ford, Cheek, Dean; NOES (3): Trustees Bates, Cohen-Thompson, Silva; ABSTINTIONS (0): None; ABSENCES (0): None)

Additional discussion followed about the confidentiality of the interview questions, as well as by staff who will help the Board through this process, so internal candidates do not receive an unfair advantage.

Of those who volunteered to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee, Trustee Dean appointed Trustees Cohen-Thompson, Coleman, and herself.

The Board expressed thanks to Mr. Speck for his leadership over the years that has placed SCOE in the excellent position it is now.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Signature on File

Jay Speck
Secretary to the Solano County Board of Education