



Santa Cruz County Board of Education • 400 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • Tel (831) 466-5900 • [www.santacruzcoe.org](http://www.santacruzcoe.org)

**Mr. Ed Acosta • Mr. Edward Estrada • Mr. Greg Larson • Ms. Sue Roth**  
**Mr. Abel Sanchez • Mr. Bruce Van Allen • Ms. Rachel Williams**

**Student Trustee: Natalie Hofkins and Ruben Marcus**

## **Santa Cruz County Board of Education**

**Regular Board Meeting**

**Thursday, May 15, 2025**

**4:00 PM Closed Session**

**5:30 PM Open Session, soon thereafter matters can be heard  
Boardroom and/or Zoom**

---

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**

Trustees Present at the Time of Roll Call:

Abel Sanchez (President), Edward Estrada (Vice President), Greg Larson, Sue Roth, Bruce Van Allen, Rachel Williams

Trustee Absent at Time of Roll Call:

Ed Acosta

Staff Present:

Dr. Faris Sabbabh (Secretary), Xaloc Cabanes, Jason Borgen, Denise Guerra-Sanson, Nick Ibarra, Melissa Lopez, Rebecca Olker, Andres Ortiz, Jesus Reyes, Liann Reyes, Dr. Marcia Russell, Dr. Michael Paynter, Amity Sandage, Audrey Sirota, Dr. Heather Thomsen, Verenise Valentin, Stephanie Villa-Lopez

##### **1.1 Board Member Remote Attendance Approval**

Per AB 2449, Trustees may participate in the Board meeting remotely under the following conditions: just cause, or emergency circumstances.

#### **2. CLOSED SESSION DISCLOSURE**

President Sanchez disclosed that the Board would, in closed session, discuss matters relating to an interdistrict transfer appeal hearing and litigation as noted in item 3.1, item 3.2, and item 3.3.

#### **3. CLOSED SESSION**

##### **3.1 Interdistrict Transfer Appeal Hearing #24-25-01**

The Board held an Interdistrict Transfer Appeal Hearing concerning a student wishing to attend school in the Scotts Valley Unified School District.

##### **3.2 Litigation Matter Discussion**

Superintendent Sabbabh shared a litigation matter with the County Board of Education.

Trustee Acosta arrived at the meeting.

**3.3 Litigation Matter Update**

Superintendent Sabbah shared a litigation update with the County Board of Education.

President Sanchez called for a 5 minute recess.

**4. OPEN SESSION**

Open session began at 5:52 p.m. The public was invited to enter the meeting room.

Student Trustees Natalie Hofkins and Ruben Marcus joined the Board for Open Session.

**5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Superintendent Sabbah led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**6. REPORT OUT AND ACTION ON CLOSED SESSION**

President Sanchez reported on Closed Session items and action.

**6.1 Interdistrict Transfer Appeal Hearing #24-25-01**

A motion was made to uphold the district's decision to deny the interdistrict transfer (Estrada/Roth, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**6.2 Litigation Matter Discussion**

A motion was made for the Santa Cruz County Office of Education to join suit on a mass action lawsuit (Larson/Estrada, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**6.3 Litigation Matter Update**

No action was taken on this matter. This item was informational only.

**7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented (Van Allen/Williams, 7-0).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Acosta, Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | None  |

Student Trustee Hofkins and Student Trustee Marcus voted yes to the motion

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Omar Dieguez (*Pajaro Valley Unified School District Resident*) shared concerns occurring in his district (PVUSD) and asked for support and resources from Superintendent Sabbah.

**9. CONSENT AGENDA**

- 9.0.1 Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on April 17, 2025
- 9.0.2 Budget Revisions
- 9.0.3 2025-2026 Personnel Commission Budget

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda as presented (Larson/Williams, 7-0).

Ayes: Acosta, Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

Student Trustee Hofkins and Student Trustee Marcus voted yes to the motion

**9.1 DEFERRED CONSENT ITEMS (if required)**

None.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

Official correspondence received by the Board was included herein.

**11. STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORTS**

Student Trustee Hofkins:

She reported that cottage school took a field trip to explore the Academy of Science Museum in San Francisco.

Student Trustee Marcus:

He shared that he's been busy with final exams and graduations.

**12. REPORTS, DISCUSSIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS**

**12.1 2025 Educators and Community Partner of the Year**

Each year, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education celebrates the accomplishments of teachers, classified employees, administrators, school counselors, and a local Community Partner. Award recipients are nominated by their peers and are awarded a plaque of outstanding achievement by Superintendent Sabbah.

Award Recipients: X-Academy, Community Partner of the Year  
John Postovit, Teacher of the Year, Scotts Valley USD  
Minc Robinson Brooker, Teacher of the Year, PVUSD  
Sylvia Alba, Counselor of the Year, PVUSD  
Amy Hedrick-Farr, Administrator of the Year, SCCS  
Jessica Serna Castañeda, Classified Employee of the Year, SCCS

Andres Ortiz, Student Leadership and Engagement Coordinator, shared appreciation for Minc Robinson Brooker.

Christie Danner, Scotts Valley High School Vice Principal shared appreciation for John Postovit.

Dr. Faris Sabbah shared appreciation for Sylvia Alba.

Jason Borgen, Chief Technology and Innovation Office, shared appreciation for X-Academy.

Amariah Hernandez, Harbor High Principal, shared appreciation for Jessica Serna Castañeda.

Liann Reyes, Deputy-Superintendent Business Services, and Dr. Heather Thomen, School Health Manager, shared appreciation for Amy Hedrick-Farr.

**12.2 Santa Cruz COE's Youth Led Leadership Alliance Presentation**

Our student leadership initiatives provide opportunities for students to develop and practice essential leadership skills such as collaboration, public speaking, self-confidence, critical thinking, and civic engagement. Students from the Santa Cruz COE's Youth Led Leadership Alliance (YLLA), representing seven leadership groups with specific goals and objectives, shared their projects and highlights during the 2024-2025 school year with the board.

Nick Ibarra, Communications and Engagement Director, and Andres Ortiz, Student Leadership and Engagement Coordinator, introduced the various student groups.

Trustee Acosta left the board meeting.

Student Trustee Hofkins and Student Trustee Marcus left the meeting.

**13. PUBLIC HEARING**

**13.1 Career Advancement Charter School (CAC) - Petition for Renewal**

The County Board of Education held a public hearing to assess the level of support for the Career Advancement Charter School renewal petition. The public was invited to share their comments.

The Petition for Renewal was submitted to the Santa Cruz County Board of Education on April 22, 2025. The Board will consider approval or denial of the petition at its regular meeting on June 12, 2025, in accordance with Education Code § 47605(b).

President Sanchez opened, conducted and closed the public hearing.

Dr. Marcia Russell presented an overview of the renewal process to the Board.

Dr. Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools, Denise Sony Guerra-Sanson, Executive Director, Student Programs, and Jesus Reyes, Community Organizer, presented the petition for renewal.

Trustees asked clarifying questions to both teams.

**14. NEW BUSINESS AND ACTION**

**14.1 Resolution #25-16 Recognizing LGBTQIA2S+ Pride Month**

Earlier this month, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, alongside school districts, raised the Progress Flag in honor of Harvey Milk Day. The Progress Flag is a visual representation of acceptance and inclusion.

A motion was made to approve Resolution #25-16 Recognizing LGBTQIA2S+ Pride Month as presented (Larson/Van Allen, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**14.2 Resolution #25-17 Recognizing Juneteenth**

Resolution #25-17 acknowledges June 19, 2025, as Juneteenth, commemorating the end of slavery in the United States and celebrating Black American freedom, resilience, and cultural contributions. By recognizing Juneteenth, the Santa Cruz COE reaffirms its commitment to equity, inclusion, and the creation of safe, supportive learning environments for all students and communities.

A motion was made to approve Resolution #25-17 Recognizing Juneteenth as presented (Larson/Van Allen, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**14.3 First Reading - Board Policies (0000s Series)**

The County Board of Education may adopt modified policies following a first and second reading by the Board. The Board may accept the following proposed policy(ies) as submitted and waive a second reading and move to take action, order changes, or order changes and bring back for a final reading:

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| BP 0415 | Equity |
|---------|--------|

A motion was made to approve BP 0415 Equity and waive a second reading with a language addition to include "disability and LGBTQ+ backgrounds" (Williams/Estrada, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**14.4 First Reading - Board Policies (5000s Series)**

The County Board of Education may adopt modified policies following a first and second reading by the Board. The Board may accept the following proposed policy(ies) as submitted and waive a second reading and move to take action, order changes, or order changes and bring back for a final reading:

|            |                                     |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| BP 5141.52 | Suicide Prevention                  |
| BP 5145.13 | Response to Immigration Enforcement |

A motion was made to approve BP 5141.52 Suicide Prevention and BP 5145.13 Response to Immigration Enforcement and waive a second reading (Estrada/Larson, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**14.5 Resolution #25-18 Establishing Institutional Membership in the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE)**

Resolution #25-18 proposes that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education join the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) to strengthen advocacy for students and public education statewide. Membership will provide a unified voice for County Boards and support leadership on issues affecting vulnerable student populations.

A motion was made to approve Resolution #25-18 Establishing Institutional Membership in the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) and to bring this item back for an annual review (Van Allen/Estrada, 6-0-0-1).

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Ayes:    | Estrada, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams |
| Nays:    | None  |
| Abstain: | None  |
| Absent:  | Acosta  |

**15. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

County Superintendent Dr. Faris Sabbah provided an update on activities and matters of interest.

**16. TRUSTEE REPORTS (3 minutes each)**

President Sanchez

He attended the PCS fundraiser BASH and shared thoughts on the board meeting start time.

Vice President Estrada

He attended the COE flag raising, the Queer Youth Leadership Awards dinner, and the United Ways Awards Gala.

Trustee Williams

She attended Inside Education, the Youth for Environmental Action Summit, met with the policy committee, and attended the COE picnic.

Trustee Van Allen

He attended the Queer Youth Leadership Awards dinner and the Youth for Environmental Action Summit.

Trustee Larson:

He submitted his report in the board meeting packet. He shared that he will be joining the June 26, 2025 board meeting via zoom.

Trustee Roth:

She attended the Rainbow Flag Raising at the SCCOE, attended the Queer Youth Leadership Awards, and the SCCOE Annual Picnic.

**17. AD HOC/STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTIONS**

**17.1 Community Outreach & Legislative Committee**

Trustee Larson reported that the committee will be bringing housing resolutions to the June 12, 2025 board meeting.

**18. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

All meetings scheduled and approved by the Board are listed below. Specific meetings may be removed or added if so determined, pending board approval.

Countywide Black Student Graduation  
May 24, 2025  
London Nelson

COE Alternative Education & Career Advancement Charter Graduations  
Week of May 27 - 30, 2025  
Various Locations

Santa Cruz Pride  
June 1, 2025  
Downtown Santa Cruz

**County Board of Education  
Regular Meeting  
June 12, 2025  
Santa Cruz County Office of Education**

**County Board of Education  
Regular Meeting  
June 26, 2025  
Santa Cruz County Office of Education**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

President Sanchez adjourned the meeting at 9:41 p.m.