



**Santa Cruz County Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, December 18, 2025 05:30 PM
Boardroom and/or Zoom**

MEETING MINUTES

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

Vice President Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked for a roll call.

Trustees Present:

Ed Acosta, Stacey Kyle, Greg Larson, Sue Roth, Abel Sanchez (President), Bruce Van Allen, Rachel Williams (Vice President)

Ash Immoor (Student Trustee)

Trustees Absent:

Vicente Guillén Martinez (Student Trustee)

Staff Present:

Dr. Faris Sabbah (County Superintendent), Lauren Fein, Verenise Figueroa, Nick Ibarra, Dr. Jennifer Izant Gonzales, Michelle Kennedy, Melissa Lopez, Hayley Newman, Rebecca Olker, Andres Ortiz, Liann Reyes, Dr. Marcia Russell, Dr. Michael Paynter

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.

President Sanchez requested remote attendance due to just cause as he is caregiving for a family member.

A motion was made to approve President Sanchez's remote attendance to the meeting (Van Allen/Roth, 6-0-1-0).

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION

No public comments were made.

3. CLOSED SESSION DISCLOSURE

Vice-President Williams disclosed that the Board would, in closed session, discuss matters relating to litigation matters.

4. CLOSED SESSION

4.1 Anticipated Litigation (Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Gov. Code, § 54956.9, subd. (d)(2);)

A tort claim was brought pursuant to the Government Claims Act: (Claim #660285).

Staff present during the closed session were Dr. Faris Sabbah, Verenise Figueroa, Michelle Kennedy, Rebecca Olker, Liann Reyes, and Dr. Marcia Russell.

5. OPEN SESSION

Open session began as soon thereafter as the matter could be heard.

6. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Superintendent Sabbah led the Pledge of Allegiance.

7. REPORT OUT AND ACTION ON CLOSED SESSION

Vice-President Williams reported on the following action made during Closed Session.

The Board took unanimous action (Sanchez/Williams) to reject the Tort Claim presented to Santa Cruz County Office of Education (Claim #660285).

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented, tabling agenda item 15.4 and moving 15.1 before agenda item 10 (Van Allen/Larson, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Xaloc Cabanes (*COE Staff Member*) shared his praises for the Computer Science playground night the County Office co-organized.

15.1 Retirement Recognitions

The Board recognized the important contributions of the following Santa Cruz County Office of Education employee who will be retiring this December:

- Liann Reyes, Deputy Superintendent-Business Services

- Laurie Stewart, Administrative Assistant, Educational Services

Dr. Sabbah recognized both Liann Reyes and Laurie Stewart. Dr. Russell also recognized Ms. Stewart for her contributions. Rebecca Olker, Melissa Lopez, and Michelle Kennedy also recognized Ms. Reyes for her contributions.

The Board shared their recognitions for the two retirees.

10. ANNUAL ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

10.1 Nominations for President of the Board

Vice-President Williams called for nominations for Board President.

Trustee Van Allen nominated Vice-President Williams. Vice-President Williams accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were made.

10.2 Election of the Board President

A motion was made to elect Vice-President Williams as Board President (Van Allen/Roth, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

Following the vote, newly elected Board President Williams assumed all Board President duties.

10.3 Nominations for the Vice President of the Board

President Williams called for nominations for Board Vice-President.

Trustee Van Allen nominated Trustee Larson. Trustee Larson accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were made.

10.4 Election of Board Vice President

A motion was made to elect Trustee Larson as Board Vice-President (Van Allen/Roth, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

10.5 Appointment of Chairperson, County Committee on School District Organization

A motion was made to appoint Trustee Sanchez as Chairperson, County Committee on School District Organization (Van Allen/Roth, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

10.6 Appointment of Representative to the Santa Cruz County School Board Association (SCZCSBA)

A motion was made to appoint Vice-President Larson as Board Representative to the Santa Cruz County School Board Association (SCZCSBA) (Immoor/Williams, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

10.7 Appointment of Representative to the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE)

A motion was made to appoint Trustee Sanchez as Board Representative to the Association of California County Boards of Education (ACCBE) (Larson/Kyle, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

10.8 Establishment of Regular Meetings of the Board

The Board was presented with a proposed 2026 Regular Board Meeting scheduled with dates reflecting the third Thursday of the month, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Xaloc Cabanes (*COE Staff Member*) shared his preference for the board meetings remaining at 5:30 p.m. for the upcoming year.

A motion was made to schedule the 2026 Regular Board meetings for the third Thursday of the month, beginning at 5:30 p.m, with the addition of a second meeting in June on Thursday, June 25, 2026 (Larson/Kyle, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

11. STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORTS

Student Trustee Immoor

He shared the experiences of an Alternative Education student. He shared that he attends the El Nido program, which focuses on credit recovery and allows for the option of taking college credit courses at Cabrillo College. He is currently taking a Latinx Ethnic Studies course and has a goal of getting into Nursing school. He shared he currently has all A's and received his CPR certification. He also shared that he would like to review the dress code policy with the policy committee and make some proposed changes.

12. CONSENT AGENDA

- 12.1 Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on November 20, 2025**
- 12.2 Budget Revisions**
- 12.3 Donations**
- 12.4 School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) for Santa Cruz County Court Schools**
- 12.5 School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) for Santa Cruz County Community Schools**

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

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

13. DEFERRED CONSENT ITEMS (if required)

None.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

Official correspondence received by the Board is included herein.

Dr. Sabbah shared that the Board should expect correspondence on SB 707 updates soon.

15. REPORTS, DISCUSSIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

15.2 Countywide Systems of Support for our Students

Dr. Michael Paynter, Executive Director, Student Support Services Department, Lauren Fein, Director of Behavioral Health, and Hayley Newman, School Climate and Wellness Manager provided an overview of Santa Cruz County's integrated, countywide systems designed to support the social-emotional and mental health needs of our students. The presentation highlighted the development and expansion of the High School Wellness Center Initiative, where students can access immediate support, prevention services, and connections to long-term care.

15.3 First Interim Financial Report

In accordance with Education Code § 1240(L), the Superintendent is required to certify the first interim financial report. Liann Reyes, Deputy Superintendent of Business Services, presented the first interim financial report to the board.

15.4 eScribe Meeting Management Software Overview

This presentation was tabled at agenda item 8 Approval of the Agenda.

16. NEW BUSINESS AND ACTION

16.1 Resolution #25-50 Authorizing the COE into local agreement with the State of California

This resolution must be adopted in order to certify the approval of the Governing Board to enter into this transaction with the California Department of Social Services for the purpose of providing child care and development services and to authorize the designated personnel to sign contract documents for Fiscal Year 2026-27.

Dr. Marcia Russell, Associate Superintendent Educational Services, presented the Resolution.

A motion was made to approve Resolution #25-50 Authorizing the COE into local agreement with the State of California as presented (Van Allen/Kyle, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

16.2 Resolution #25-51 School Board Recognition Month

A strong public education system is essential for the well-being of California's citizens and communities. The Santa Cruz County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools express gratitude to all public school board members in Santa Cruz County and declare January 2026 as School Board Recognition Month.

Vice-President Larson, former chair of the Community Outreach and Legislature Committee, presented the Resolution.

A motion was made to approve Resolution #25-51 School Board Recognition Month as presented and to share this Resolution alongside a letter of support with local school boards (Larson/Williams, 7-0).

Student Trustee Immoor voted yes to this motion.

17. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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

18. TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustee Roth

She attended the Budget Committee meeting.

Trustee Kyle

She had lunch with Student Trustees Immoor and Guillen Martinez. She also attended the winter concerts at Shoreline Middle School and Harbor High School. In addition, she announced that the CCS Honor Choir, Band, and Orchestra selections were released, and twenty-three high school band students from Santa Cruz County were selected. She looks forward to attending the concert at Cabrillo's VAPA Theater on Saturday, February 7 at 2:00. Tickets are free and all are invited.

Vice-President Larson

He attended the CSBA conference. He shared that his highlights were attending the legal symposium, workforce housing, and closing session on artificial intelligence). He was invited to join a CSBA focus group on County Math initiatives. He attended the Computer Science Playground Night at the Museum of Art and History. He also attended the Budget committee meeting.

Trustee Acosta

He attended the Watsonville City Council Meeting and was pleased to see many Watsonville High School students.

Trustee Van Allen

He is looking forward to being on the policy committee again.

President Williams

She attended the HER Story event at the Museum of Art and History. She also attended the CSBA conference. She also attended the Rising event at the Rio and the agenda committee meeting. She also has been watching local district board meetings. She also attended the ACCBE charter renewal meeting.

Trustee Sanchez

He attended the HER Story event at the Museum of Art and History. He also attended the agenda committee meeting and ACCBE charter renewal meeting. He also attended the Noche de Brillo event in Watsonville.

19. AD HOC/STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTIONS

None.

20. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

A motion was made to schedule a special board meeting on **January 8, 2026** to conduct an interdistrict transfer appeal hearing, beginning at 5:30 p.m. (Williams/Van Allen, 7-0).

January 24, 2026

County Board of Education - Special Meeting & Board Workshop
Santa Cruz County Office of Education
9:00 a.m.

21. ADJOURNMENT

President Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:56 p.m.